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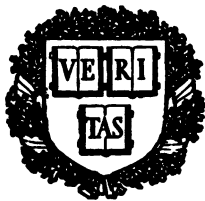
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ON THE WHOLE DOCTRINE
OF FINAL CAUSES.

A DISSERTATION IN THREE PARTS,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER ON
THE CHARACTER OF MODERN DEISM.

Josiah
BY WILLIAM J. IRONS, M.A.

OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND CURATE OF ST. MARY'S,
NEWINGTON, SURREY.

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΔΙΚΑΙΕ, ΚΑΙ Ὁ ΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΣΕ ΟΥΚ ΕΓΝΩ, ΕΓΩ ΔΕ ΣΕ
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ΕΓΝΩΡΙΣΑ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΣΟΥ. ΙΗΣΟΥΣ.

✓
LONDON:

J., G., & F. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,
AND WATERLOO-PLACE.

1836.

Phil 8663.1

1875, March 22.
Walker Bequest.



T. C. HANSARD, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

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P R E F A C E.

So little attention is ordinarily paid to what an Author says of his own performance, that a Preface is now almost thought to be a superfluous piece of labour. But for the sake of those who may yet consider it as a courtesy due to the Reader, as well as for my own sake, I shall venture to trespass for a few lines.

It may appear to many, that the phrase “WHOLE Doctrine,” used in the Title-page, requires some explanation; which, I own, I have difficulty in briefly giving; though on a general review of the Dissertation, I cannot persuade myself to alter it. I would, indeed, if it be necessary, disclaim the vanity of implying thereby, that much more may not be said on this subject, than I have brought forward: and yet I must say, that I have attempted to ascertain the exact Truth, that is to say, the “Whole Doctrine,” in opposition

to the *partial* depreciations of some writers, and exaggerations of others. And I cannot help thinking, that if I were to omit the word "Whole," the title would be less suitable to the book than it is at present. Whether it be so, or not; or whether the question be of any importance, I must leave to the decision of the Public, who will be the ultimate judges, not of this only, but (which is of much more consequence) of the Book itself.

I could not acquit myself of ingratitude, if I were here to omit all reference to the late Regius Professor of Divinity, in the University of Oxford, the Rev. Edward Burton, D.D., whose loss the Church and the University have such deep and painful reason to deplore. Having received the permission of that distinguished divine to dedicate this Dissertation to him, I am bound to state, that he could not have been held responsible for every opinion herein advanced. Well knowing that no patronage could ultimately benefit any book which is destitute of all intrinsic merit, I was yet induced to seek the sanction of Professor Burton's name, thinking that it might secure a fair portion of attention for an

unknown author, which in the crowd and bustle of the world, he might not otherwise have obtained. I was also anxious to testify the high respect which I then bore to his character; and with which I now regard his memory; as a man, who by his learned and arduous labours, had so ably supported the cause of sound Christianity; which sacred cause, I venture to hope that this Dissertation may contribute in some degree to maintain. My motives for seeking the learned Professor's sanction cannot now, I trust, be liable to misconstruction; and I will not pretend that in giving me that sanction, he intended any thing more than an expression of his kind estimate of my character. I could, indeed, wish that this Volume were more worthy of such patronage. In the hope of making it so, I have already delayed its publication for several months. The new and arduous duties which I have been called to perform, (which left me no leisure even to correct the press,) are my sole excuse for the brevity and imperfection of the Third Part of the Work in particular; the subject of which is of such powerful interest and high importance, that I purpose at some future time, should my present attempt

prove successful, to publish a distinct treatise upon it.

With regard to one particular, in the style of the Dissertation, I crave some indulgence ; I fear that I may sometimes appear egotistic, because I have not in general moulded my sentences in the fashionable plural form, [“ we”] nor in the awkward impersonal singular : which results from this circumstance ; that while I was writing, my thoughts generally flowed in the same channel as if I had been speaking, and I could not afterwards alter it, without introducing a wearisome uniformity and pompous stiffness, which would have been intolerable. And I conceived that this rhetorical manner might not be very reprehensible (unless it degenerated into looseness of expression) in a professed Dissertation ; which is, so to speak, a kind of oration at the bar of Human Reason.

An apology may, I freely admit, be required, for the style of some part of the Introductory Chapter, especially in a work of this kind, where precision of expression is to be expected. But I have thought that the

practical truths therein enforced might perhaps produce a stronger impression, by being communicated in the natural, if somewhat impassioned, language, in which they were first written, than if they were enunciated in a milder tone, and with a more rigid manner.

Of the subject-matter of the Volume, it were needless for me to speak, as no observations of mine can enhance its momentous importance; and all necessary information respecting my drift and design, will be found in the commencement of the Dissertation. As Truth has been my object, and not singularity of sentiment, it will not seem strange that I have sometimes advanced opinions which have been held by those who have preceded me in the same inquiry. And though I hope that some important Truths, which seem to a great extent to have escaped previous observation, are here put forth; and some plausible errors detected; (otherwise, I could have no right to appear thus before the public;) yet I cannot of course pretend that *all* is novel, which is here brought forward. I have sometimes only attempted a clearer statement and development of admitted Truth; which may,

perhaps, be oftentimes as valuable as original discovery. " If I have done well, it is that which I desired ; if I have done ill, it is that which I could attain unto."

But if, while earnestly endeavouring to discover Truth, I have unwittingly said any thing injurious thereto, it is my hearty desire that it may meet with that faithful exposure which error deserves ; and which is as distinct from asperity of censure, as honesty is from ill-nature.

From the Critics who may honour me with their notice, I have no right to demand indulgence for my errors, whatever may be the character of my motives. I only ask, therefore, what I have but little doubt that I shall obtain, the fair and candid treatment which fellow-workers in the mine of Truth have a right to expect of each other.

INTRODUCTION.

ON THE CHARACTER OF MODERN DEISM.

THE history of man, for nearly six thousand years, presents us with the phenomenon of a slowly-advancing civilization, which forms a stern antithesis to those visions and hopes of the future, which Philanthropists often entertain. This tardy progress of human society is not to be accounted for by vain-glorious imputations on the intelligence of former times. They who ascribe so much to modern illumination, and speculate largely on the possible extension of knowledge and happiness, are not therefore the wisest or most thoughtful of their generation. In their bold calculations of the glories of a coming era, they take but little notice of the obstacles which always arise to thwart the operation of the noblest schemes, and render abortive the strongest efforts for promoting human good. Above all, they forget that mighty counteracting cause—the original depravity of the hearts of men—which (unchecked, as the majority always are, by a sense of religion) bursts forth, overpoweringly, from time to time, bearing down the

virtue of the good, and defying the sagacity of the wise. Thus, it would seem that "vain philosophy" delights to build faëry palaces on the ridges of a volcano, beneath which, evermore, the pent-up lava boils and flames.

The Moral Eras in the history of our race are but few, and have generally been accomplished by the operation of unobserved causes. Nature loves not to usher in her great events with pomp and ostentatious noise. We pass from the old year to the new, and hear no announcement of the change ; and thus when man is passing from one stage of civilization to another—when one moral cycle is completed, and another is about to begin—no trumpet's voice is heard proclaiming it to the Universe.

But the transition is not the less real, because thus silently performed, and unmarked by the multitude. —When the obscure shepherds of Judea hastened to the villages of Palestine, telling that they had seen at midnight a sudden glory, and had heard mysterious music from a choir of the descended Seraphim—the great, and wise, and noble of the earth knew nothing of THE ERA that then began to dawn on mankind. The few who listened to the wonderful story might smile at what they deemed a rustic reverie. But it was then, in very truth, that AN ERA commenced, of all Eras the greatest, the influence whereof shall be felt and seen in all future time ! HE who then "came to visit us in all humility" made known to man "the mystery hid from ages and

generations" — a lowly individual of a despised people, HE revealed a religion which, by the native might of goodness and of truth, was destined, ere long, to shake (that citadel of falsehood) the massy fabric of Heathen superstition; and which finally overthrew the most gigantic confederacy of priestly jealousy, political hatred, and imperial power, that had been ever known among mankind. He sent forth his unarmed messengers to proclaim war with the opinions of all men—bidding them to spare no prejudices, but trample on the idols, and set at nought the philosophy of the world. And the spiritual kingdom which they founded (however its advances to universal dominion may be checked for a time) shall eventually prevail against all opposition; for the decree which once went forth will not be revoked—"The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish, yea those nations shall be utterly wasted!"

But no Era, no moral revolution in the history of man, ought to come upon us unawares. There are unerring signs whereby the change may be foreseen. Though the nations be keeping high festival—like the Chaldean monarch of old — a solitary hand "coming forth from the obscure" may be tracing words of omen, which seem to have no meaning to the ungifted gaze of the careless passer-by! Or it may happen that the minds of all men are possessed with vague and general apprehension of what is about to be—and they will stand in expectation, like

the inhabitants of a city who have heard the rumbling of an earthquake, and are waiting for the shock. And, when this is not the case, there will be fore-runners — philosophers or prophets — the harbingers of future times. They may be scorned or martyred — for (in the language of the German poet)

“ These have been always crucified and burned !”¹

but they leave their testimony behind them. An Era is at hand !

Oftentimes before that Era may arrive, the external aspect of things may be such as to lead the superficial to conclude, that all change must be far distant. There may be a strong revulsion in the general feeling—a sudden check to the onward progress of events, and even a recurrence to the abandoned opinions and maxims of a former time. The superficial will be deceived, and conclude, that now the advancing tide of human things has ebbed once more, therefore it will never return ; while the next flowing of the waters may sweep away some huge promontory that seemed eternal !

Even now, while I write, an ERA may be at hand ! Whoever will look steadily at the moral aspect of Christendom, at the present moment, may find abundant reason for anxious thought and perplexed anticipation.

¹ From a MS. translation of Goethe's *Faust*—by a Gentleman formerly of Queen's College, Oxford.

Romish Christianity, and a liberal Deism possess the continent of Europe. The advocates of a maximum and a minimum of Faith dwell strangely together, in perfect amity, mutually tolerating each other. Not the Romanism of the 16th century, nor the Deism of the 18th,—for these could never co-exist. The experiment was tried in France a hundred years ago, and after short lapse of time the hostile principles came into actual contact, and in their explosion shattered even the iron frame-work of Feudal society! The Romanist and the Infidel have alike learned wisdom; both have moderated their pretensions. But their natures are not changed, though their characters be modified. The modern liberal Deism is by its very nature *aggressive*; and the best terms which Romanism can obtain of her ancient enemy only provide, that the aggression shall be made by a gradual process, which may postpone, for a while, all serious danger. The two parties appear, with mutual concession, to meet each other half-way. An Abbé may now preach the doctrines of Neology without provoking the thunders of the Vatican; while, on the other hand, the “Enlightened” acquiesce in the miracles of the mendicant priests, deeming some superstition necessary, at present, for the vulgar.

And can we doubt of the tendency of this state of things?—The present generation in France¹ have not

¹ More than half the children born in Paris are illegitimate. More than half the poor die in Hospitals!—See *Alison's Hist.* of the French Revolution:

now recovered from the effects of the almost Atheistic education of their infancy and childhood; and, in like manner, will the rising population of Europe have entailed on them the curse of the crude infidelity and liberalized religion of their fathers.

England—separated from the great continental nations by her insular position, her religion, and even her prejudices—was long preserved from the contagion of foreign Infidelity and Superstition.

At length the plague has reached even to us. Without doubt it is, in some degree, tempered by our peculiar climate, but the symptoms of the disorder are undeniable. However much the truth be disguised, we cannot be ignorant that, within the last twenty years, there has been a rapid spread among us of subtle modifications of Popery and Infidelity.

Increased intercourse with Europe brought with it new opinions, new habits, and eventually new institutions. It has been remarked, that even our old national parties are *extinct*, and new ones have risen up, analogous to those on the continent—the defenders and the aggressors—the religious and the “liberal.” Yet it may be seen, that there is this striking distinction between the present condition of England and that of the rest of the nations :—The contest of our parties, instead of being a mere “War of opinions” seems likely to assume a RELIGIOUS character.

And it may surely be marked as a circumstance of high import. For if a manly, rational, and scrip-

tural Christianity is not to be wholly swept from the earth—if it is to be any where preserved for future generations—where shall it be, if not in England?

Three hundred years have passed, since England was severed from Papal Europe, and assumed that character which she has since sustained. She has been placed on a proud eminence. From the days of the Reformation until now, her Church has been looked to, as the bulwark of the Reformed Faith—the head quarters of the Protestantism of the world. She arose, as from the slumber of ages—shook off, with giant strength, the mass of weighty corruptions that had accumulated in the darkness, and stood forth, dauntless in her purity—the witness for God, amidst “a world lying in wickedness.”

“Truth’s deathless voice had paus’d among mankind”—

but, now, it was heard once more!—and the nations were thrilled with tumultuous expectations,

“As some lone man who in a desert hears
The music of his home.”

Centuries of ignorance and darkness had gone before, while there had risen up, but at intervals, some solitary Wicliffe, to herald the coming change. But at length it burst upon the world.

The most powerful engine that had ever been brought to bear on human civilization, and which must itself be considered as marking an era in man’s history,—the Printing-press,—had been in previous operation, and, by its silent agency, accelerated the mighty crisis of the Reformation. The Rulers of this

world mingled variously in the events of that most momentous time, and have left a various fame behind them—of *ambition,¹ policy,² treachery,³ virtuous magnanimity,⁴ or enthusiasm of religious chivalry⁵. But the Reformation was the result of a mightier power than theirs.

That Era, doubtless, brought with it its blessings and its curses : a future era may annihilate the latter, and leave only the former. The pulpit and the press, without denial, have spread controversy and dissension where formerly the unanimity of ignorance had prevailed ; but this may only be the necessary ordeal through which man must pass, to arrive at a nobler state,—the unanimity of knowledge. The weapons of religious strife, in these later times, may (if the parallel be allowable) be likened to the fatal machinery of modern warfare, which, while it fearfully augments the sanguinary character of war, diminishes its moral malignity and the frequency of its occurrence, and may possibly lead at last to that glorious period, when “there shall be war no more.”

The divines of the English Reformation, like armed champions, clothed in the mail of their “ponderous erudition,” bore down resistlessly on their encamped enemies, and, with an ardour that dared danger and death, achieved an immortal victory. Their immediate descendants retained all their high-wrought zeal ; but the mantle of cloistered

* ¹ Henry VIII. ; ² Leo X. ; ³ Charles V. ; ⁴ Frederick of Saxony ; and ⁵ Gustavus of Sweden, may be instanced.

learning descended not on them. It was a fatal loss,¹ and, as such, not unperceived by the enemies of the reformed faith, both Romish and Infidel. These, though maintaining hostility to each other, adroitly availed themselves of the error of their common foe, and sedulously cultivated the lore which the descendants of the Reformers had neglected. They solicited not then the suffrages of the populace—for that had been a vain attempt,—but, in the still retirement of a philosophic or a courtly circle, defended, with elaborate care, the superstitions of the past, or the scepticism of the coming age.

But far different are the times wherein our lot is cast. Our Reformed Church now emulates the learning of her early confessors and martyrs, but seems almost fearful of a revival of their enthusiastic zeal for God and truth; and Romanism and Infidelity have taken signal advantage of her error. For with them may now be found the popular eloquence of the press, the pulpit, and the platform! Their wisdom despises not auxiliaries so strong: they have abandoned their ancient hatred to each other; and hoping, at length, to enlist on their side the honest earnestness and powerful prejudices of the populace, they have united their forces, for open war, beneath banners inscribed with the outraged name of “Liberal!” The Infidel, as the more powerful of the two allies, dictates the terms of the confederacy; and the Ro-

¹ Deeply deplored by Bishop Jewel. See the *Life* prefixed to the *Apology*, p. 62. See also *Lutheri Epist.* vol. ii. 307.

manist, as the reward of his faithfulness to the common cause, claims to be second ruler in the kingdom of the New Antichrist.

There was a time when less of policy was wont to mark the counsels of the Infidel ; there was a time—nor has it long passed by—when the apostles of disbelief, inspired with fiendly madness, foamed forth their rabid blasphemies of the “rights of”—devils, to lay waste the peace of earth and defy the majesty of heaven ! What marvel was it, that then, all men, as by a common instinct, recoiled from the hideous absurdities of possessed savages—the unnatural enormities of naked demoniac ferocity ? But now the Infidel and his new ally, have left unused no popular artifice, which fraud could suggest or dishonesty employ. They are conciliatory in their tone, and moderate, though steady and undisguised in their advances. They enter on no sudden crusade against the established opinions of the multitude ; but rather engage their worst passions in their favor, by directing all their fierce hostility against, what they insolently call, the “bigotry” of those who are the staunch foes alike of irreligion and superstition, and who are, as yet, the authorised teachers of our people.

But Romanism can, in this country, and in these times, only advance, under the protection of the ample shield of “liberal” infidelity, and it behoves us to know well this our arch-enemy.

The infidelity of this age assumes a Deistic rather

than a sceptical or Atheistic form. If it had been otherwise, it could not have kept terms with Popery. If it had been otherwise, it could never have become extensively popular. It seems to be tacitly admitted that there is a kind of germ of "natural religion," which is the only essential part of every creed that is found among men ; which the philosopher may see and appreciate in them all, while he winks at the peculiar follies which may accompany it. The coarse and infamous maxim, which, at its first announcement long since was repudiated with disgust, now passes current among us — 'that a man is no more accountable for his religious belief, than for the colour of his dress.'¹ This it is which is now vaunted as "liberality." Need I bid the christian to recall, and place side by side with this impiety, (this black stigma upon the veracity of God !) the dread denunciations, on the one hand, or the "hope full of immortality," on the other, wherewith our divine master accompanied his message of salvation to man ?——But "liberality" is now "all in all," and honesty passes for nothing ! Liberality, which, being interpreted, means nothing less than latitude in religion, and discontent in politics. There are those, even in what is called (perhaps to distinguish it from the church) the "religious world," who cherish this spirit, which wears so fair a name. There are those (and it were needless to define them more plainly) who find a specious "common ground"

¹ Lord Brougham.

whereon they may meet and associate with the professor, or the despiser, of every creed ; who seem to imagine that a “ voluntary ” surrender of honesty, is to be regarded as the precursor of a smooth millennium now gradually drawing nigh ! A prospect, indeed, less like to that which the thoughtful christian may look for, than to the delusive dreams of the visionary philanthropist ; which yet (alas !) are too often deemed sufficient data for the fantastic schemes of our economic and reforming patriots !

The Christian Church of this realm has, indeed, a powerful enemy to encounter—an enemy, at one time, vindictive and fierce, with menacing brow, and insulting tongue ; at another, approaching with gentle smiles and words of courtesy. But our church is not now ignorant of her dangers ; and let her not be unmindful of the honour, which, in past times as well as these present, has been conferred upon her ; in that she is selected as the “ witness for the truth ! ”—for she will answer it to her God, if she be either awed by terrors, or seduced by treacherous wiles !

It is not reasoning, or thoughtfulness ; but, I repeat, a false “ liberality,” which is at once the parent and the patron of modern Infidelity. A liberality in morals, which will forgive all delinquencies, save those that are openly scandalous. A liberality in religion, which pardons all motley varieties of creeds, reserving its sole anathema for honest uncompromising Christianity. For not only is a reverence for the authority of the Church counted a mark of supersti-

tion and weakness, but hardly can a man, in modern life, give utterance to a peculiarly Christian sentiment, without drawing on himself the cold glances of his wondering friends ; and he must express himself with scrupulous caution, if he would avoid the blasting imputation of fanaticism or monomania. And therefore even christian men, of unblemished lives and undoubting faith, too often blink their true principles when they intermix with the world's society ; and listen, without reproving, to dogmas of falsehood, to unchristian morality, or perhaps to scoffing ribaldry.

To this is it owing, that even when the actual subject of discourse is connected with the Christian faith, it is toned down to the fastidious ears of the "liberal," so that but a hair's-breadth is left, between Christianity and pure Deism. And indeed, it might well become us to reflect, how large a portion of what passes as Christianity is but Deism in disguise !

For the tactics of Infidelity are now such as the world has not seen before. There is no direct assault ; but a hypocritical parley is proclaimed, to give time for the process of undermining.

Advantage is taken of the differences among Christians, to inculcate a belief in the "uncertainty" or uselessness of religion ;—which is about as rational a conclusion as to infer, from the differences among governments, that all government is evil, and anarchy the greatest benefit ! But any sophistry is successful when men's hearts are willing to be deceived by their heads. And thus the opinion gains

ground, that in matters of faith, all questions, of more or less, are of but trifling moment; while, at the same time, the Christian "Revelation" and the Christian "Church," may be artfully mentioned in terms of respectful apathy.

This same spirit of "liberality" which has thus blighted the social Christianity of our land, has breathed its influence over a large portion of our literature. Too often are

"Jehovah! Jove, and Lord,"

most profanely classed together. Too often have even professed Christian writers gracefully diluted the peculiar doctrines of our religion, to make their volumes palatable to the literary sceptic, or escape the sneer of "liberal" criticism. If in their pages "our Saviour" is spoken of at all, it is almost in such indistinct and general terms as might suit the master in a purer school of morals, but which seem too like degradation when applied to him "Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Or, at the best, He is referred to as a Benefactor of our race, who perhaps made the pathway to heaven somewhat more convenient! While the stern but unpalatable Christian Truth is forgotten—(though pronounced by the voice of our Redeemer himself, when on earth) "I am THE Way—The Truth—and the Life! No man cometh unto the Father *but by ME!*"

It may doubtless be urged, with truth, that the guilty extravagances of sectarian folly have struck aghast the sober believer. The fierce Sirocco-blast

of fanatical frenzy has, truly, seared the verdure of the "Garden of the Lord." And thus it is, that a strict profession of Christianity is, oftentimes, now reckoned a reproach. Thus it is, that the idea of a caricature of Holiness has almost become identified with the very name of "sanctity"—and too often may we search far, and search vainly—for a true portraiture of a "Saint" of God! And *should* it be thus? Are we to be frightened out of sincerity?—sneered out of truth?—laughed out of holiness? Or is it indeed a mark of sober wisdom, to sit still as if stunned into Stoicism, because we are appalled at the ghastly activities of some exulting maniac?

It is true, that Infidelity has found many a bitter sarcasm against our faith, in the ardent vagaries of false or misguided enthusiasts. It is true, that the fiery footmarks of unthinking zealots have left a brand on the ground which they scorched as they traversed. It is true, that dishonesty and ignorance have both assumed the mask of earnestness.¹ But it is also true, that the infidel has availed himself, with equal dexterity, of the dormant calmness of our conscious orthodoxy. And, indeed, true heart-religion has more to fear, in this world's cold atmosphere, from the chill of neglect, than from the warmth of over-nourishment. If the hoar frost continue too long in its unmitigated rigour, it will

¹ But, as some one observed of Italian preaching, "C'est un *faux* *systematique*!"

extinguish the vitality of vegetation as surely, if not as suddenly, as the scorching sun, or the stroke of the withering lightning.

The erudite, though sophistical, Infidelity of the last century was not encountered and overthrown by flimsy declamation, but by volumes weighty with argument, and resistless in their vigorous eloquence. And thus, too, the more popular Deism of our times must be met with appropriate weapons. And let no man call it a descent from our high vantage-ground of reason and of truth, where we might for ever remain intrenched alone. Let not the Christian think it beneath him to employ *intelligible* arguments, and the simple eloquence of earnestness, in so high a matter. Shall the pride of dialectical skill, or the coldness of classic reasoning, hinder the minister of God in the great work of human salvation?

So far as the Deistical philosophy is argumentative, it may be combatted by abstract reasoning; but Deism is not, in these times, confined to those who reason. Perhaps the majority of its disciples are implicit believers, who embrace it because so concise a creed is acquired with but little trouble; and, in addition to its convenience in other respects, obtains for its professors a small, but, to them, a flattering reputation for some degree of attainment or acuteness. This species of popular philosophy, such as it is, is a compound of heterogeneous materials, gathered chiefly from the most attractive of the

writings of confuted sceptics of the past age ; or, perhaps most frequently, gleaned from the lighter literature of the present time. Enough of opinions, and objections, and names, may be learned from these sources to satisfy the loquacious vanity or the depraved hearts of the multitude who find “ objections ” much easier to remember than “ answers.” But is this wretched philosophy to be left in unnoticed contempt?—If the men who embrace it, must live for ever ; if it be strong enough to root out religion, and implant malignity in their hearts ; then let us not think it so weak that we may dare despise it !

The causes, from which this shallow infidelity has resulted, are far different from those to which it is often imputed. There are many who attribute it to the increase of knowledge ; and those, on the contrary, who ascribe it to the ignorance of the neglected multitude ; but they who will attentively observe the moral phenomena, will not be inclined to think them explicable by either of these causes. For a moral evil, we look for a moral origin ; and when the premises of an argument (as, for instance, the argument for the Christian revelation) are intelligible to all, a weakness of reasoning must be ascribed to weakness of intellect. So that if it be true—and who will deny it?—that our modern Deism is generally accompanied by a laxity of moral principle, or an incapacity for sound mental exertion—then it will seem reasonable to say, that

Deism is the effect of a depraved heart, and (whether with much or little "knowledge,") a narrow intellect.

The remedy for evils such as these, cannot surely be to raise outcries against knowledge, or vainly to struggle against the increasing power of education. Those who enter on so hopeless a course cannot—*ought* not to, find success. It is, indeed, a delusion to suppose, with some, that the spread of knowledge will be accompanied necessarily by a moral renovation of the world. But though we look not thus on any system of education as a key to unlock the imaginary storehouse that contains the summum bonum of the human race,—though we look not for the magnificent effects of diffused knowledge which some foretel,—there is no Christian duty more plain or imperative than that of instructing the uninformed, enlightening those that are in darkness, and alleviating, so far as our power extends, the curse of ignorance which afflicts mankind.

We may indeed find strange co-adjutors in our efforts—those who, like the infidel encyclopedists of France, affect to give forth the most profound knowledge in a popular form: and we may meet strange enemies—those ill-taught zealots who imagine the interests of religion and ignorance to be identical! But we must not be deterred either by the false friendship of the infidel idolator of "knowledge," nor by the vain vaticinations of the despiser of "mere human learning."

The Christian, who would fitly maintain the honor of his faith, must fight its battle with unsullied weapons of argument and candour, and in a nobler arena, the circle of honourable literature. It is time that the meagre technicalities of exploded controversial systems were abolished; the uncouthness of an affected dialect laid aside; and the ancient truths of our Reformed Faith, defended, in their purity and simplicity, in language of a congenial character. Let us not deceive ourselves by imagining that the moral evils of our times grow less, because we shut our eyes, and refuse to see them. Without doubt, our holy religion is suited to all the possible exigencies of man; but who shall wonder that it is not more prosperous, while it is associated, by its advocates, with principles that “decay, wax old, and are ready to vanish away?” or delivered in an antiquated style which is conceived to be “Evangelical,” because it bears a faint analogy to the stately diction of our Church formularies, or our English translation of the Bible? It is surely possible to clothe the truths of our religion in language as plain and chaste as any other truth will admit of; and why then must they be any longer associated with the barbarous phrases of a barbarous age,—with a quaint theological language, the offspring of perverted taste, and decrepit intellect? Men whose whole theology is contained in one idea, or one small circle of ideas, will perhaps be inclined to denounce a purity of style which they might not be able to imitate; or to retain for them-

selves those consecrated words and licensed phrases which have so long supplied the place of thought. But, if we would see Christianity maintain that lofty situation which is its right; if we would see the most knowing infidel abashed before its dignity, we must see to it that we are guiltless of encumbering its purity with worn-out crudities, and studied vulgarity.

In a word—It is notorious that infidelity has a powerful hold upon our literature; education irresistibly advances; morality is every where relaxed; society seems, indeed, to be almost subsisting on the lingering credit of ancient notions and expiring opinions. And in this convulsed state of the moral world can it be doubtful what course the Christian Church is bound to pursue?

While we can advocate no lenient dealing with the unthinking infidelity of our times, it is necessary to maintain the first importance of a recurrence to the vigorous and life-giving principles of our faith; and an abandonment of mere artificial peculiarities, which by their affectation and littleness, deform the dignity of those eternal truths, the simple enunciation of which might fill with solemn awe the most obdurate mind. And I would indeed ask, whether it be not a high offence against the majesty of Truth, to render it contemptible in the eyes of any man? Not that I would justify or even palliate the stupendous folly of scoffing at or neglecting the fearful realities of a life to come, because of the weaknesses of some professors of

religion? Not that I would tolerate for a moment the monstrous thought, that the profound verities of an hereafter are to be treated as mere matters of taste! But, if the Chief of the Apostles toiled with assiduous anxiety, "that by any means he might gain some"—how can we deem ourselves his worthy followers, while we persist in giving our instructions to mankind in unnecessarily repulsive modes?

But the superstitious obstinacy with which too many have adhered to pernicious though favorite formalities of diction, has not been more favorable to the growth of infidelity, than the incautious concessions of others on more important points. For thus that "natural religion," wherein the infidel so much confides, comes frequently to be regarded as the necessary datum for revelation, and, consequently, as previously established on *independent* grounds. If there were no ulterior evil in this fatal concession, there is this—that it gives currency to a specious language which suits alike the theology of the Christian and the Deist; which originates in the minds of many the insidious notion that there is no important difference between the two; and that, in reality, so far as they do differ, the Deist may, perhaps, have the advantage, as he is a professed follower of "reason." But this is far from being the only evil that results from this prolific source—this admission of the possibility of a purely natural Theology. This is, indeed, the chief ground of that portion of modern infidelity which pretends to

be reasonable, and, as such, deserves a closer examination than it has often met with.

Of the force of these remarks, the world has, not long since, had powerful proof, in a popular discourse written in this convenient tongue, which suits alike the infidel and the believer.¹ In that discourse, though Christianity (when slightly alluded to) is generally treated with tolerable respect, the *tone* is anti-christian throughout; and, but for the ambiguous dialect of the Natural Theologians, it would not be endured by most of those, by whom it is now read and admired. The disguise of sentiment is not, indeed, perfect, though sufficiently so for the general eye; but the latent sarcasm wherewith the best advocates of our faith are disparaged, the tenderness for the fame of notorious unbelievers, and, above all, the intangible duplicity of injurious hint or innuendo, reveal, but too faithfully, to the attentive reader, the creed and character of the author.²

Our popular Deism is, indeed, a most subtle foe; for it has even invaded our libraries and our temples, and passed, with most of us, as a friend! It is a subtle foe; for its bland words of liberal seeming flatter the pride and lull the suspicions of the many! And they who will engage with this enemy of God and man will find but few allies. The Reformed Church of this realm may almost anticipate a single-handed conflict!—it may be that so powerful a

¹ Lord Brougham's Discourse of Natural Theology. See note A.

² See note A.

foe will defy all earthly power—all human agency, (though that surmise will absolve no Christian from the contest!); but yet, I say, it may be, that the gigantic impieties of these latter times are reserved for a special out-pouring of the wrath of Almighty God!

And though so few be found whose allegiance to their faith is unshaken, we may not be dismayed; for it is written, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” And whether that coming be distant, or even now drawing nigh, our prospect is the same—the victory of God’s church is as sure, as if to-morrow’s dawn should reveal in terrible majesty the Son of Man coming “in the clouds of Heaven!”

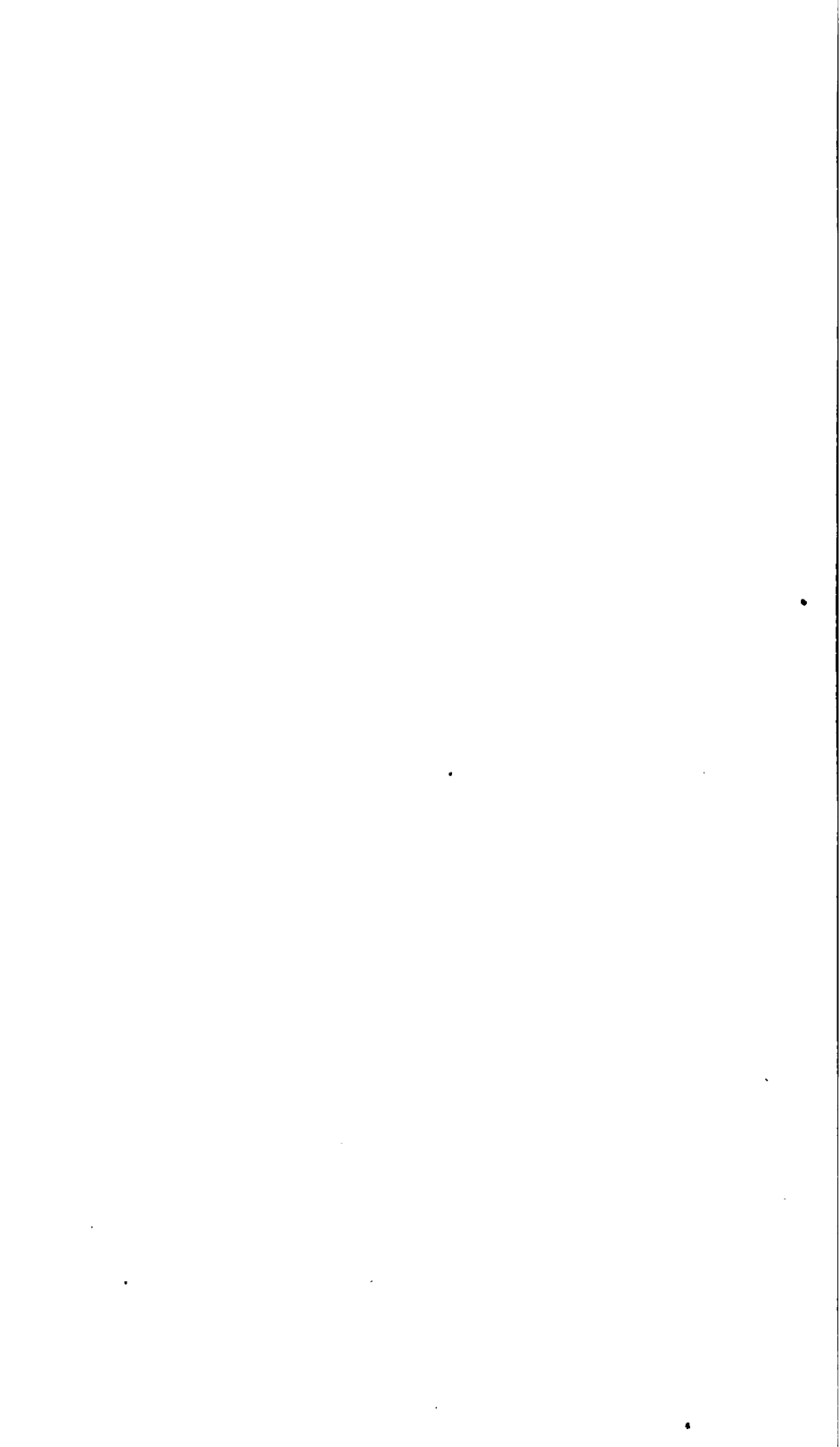
That stirring exhortation addressed to an ancient Church, is not unsuitable to us—“Stand fast! quit you like men! be strong!” And in the times that are coming, it will not be enough that our creed be “orthodox.” They will not be times of repose; therefore, our faith must be defended with masculine energy of thought, which will compel a fashionable audience, even in spite of themselves, to *think*!—They must be defended with a pure enthusiasm, becoming men who are in earnest, as remote from the hot vulgarity of some as from the austere formalism of others. For on us will be the guilt of the degradation and poverty of that religion whereof we are the appointed guardians, if we surrender intelligence and knowledge as the lawful patrimony of the

infidel, and enthusiastic ardour as the sole right of the fanatic.

But it may be hoped that there are, even now, symptoms among us of the approach of a better era, both of christian knowledge and christian zeal ; and that The Church is arising like Zion of old, “to put on her beautiful garments” that she may be the purer testifier for truth in a corrupt generation. The Church grows weary of the barren speculations, compounded of inaccurate metaphysics, and “wrested” quotations of Scripture ; and we hail the appearance of a spirit which is anxious to investigate the book of Revelation, as it examines the book of Nature—regarding the *texts* of the one, as no less indisputable and simple than the *facts* of the other. We hail the approach of a purer era, wherein the Bible shall be consulted as the oracle of God, and no longer thumbed as the text-book of human systems. Nor do we welcome the less the advent of that time, because it may be the signal of the approach of fiery trials, for which the Church is thus prepared by him who would have her “without spot or blemish, or any such thing !”

In the latter days it was foretold that “perilous times must come,” and close this dispensation as they closed the last ; but though the scattered tribes of our Israel be apostate, or rebellious, may Judah yet “remain faithful with her God !”—bearing, as of old, her noble testimony to his truth ! (undismayed by danger, unwearied by toil !) amidst the aboundings of Infidelity, the advances of Popery, and the “waxing cold

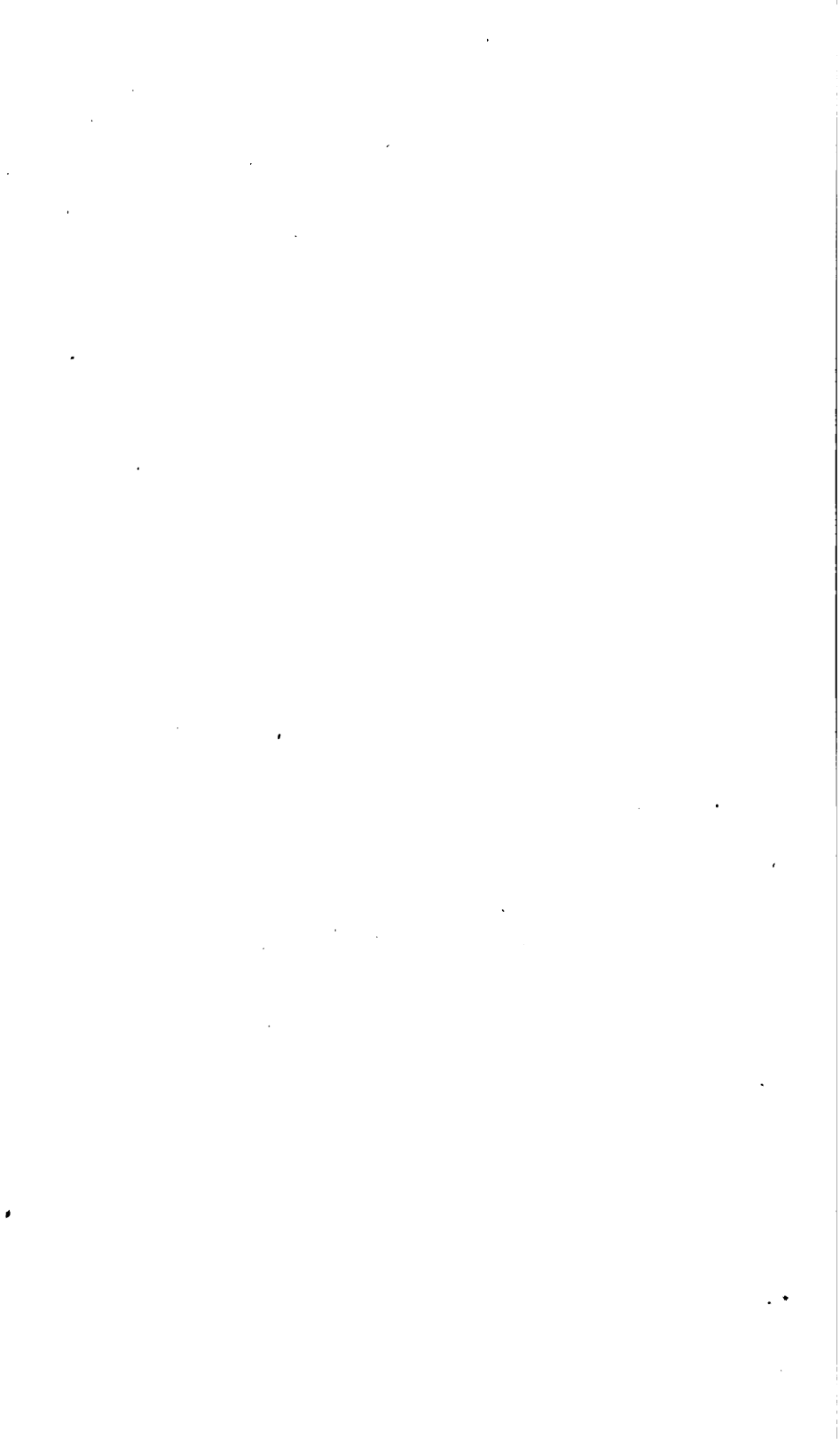
of the love of many !” That when the “ world of the ungodly” have provoked the delayed vengeance of the Most High ; when the torrents of judgment descend like cataracts from Heaven, and the “ fountains of the great deep” of Retribution “ are broken up,” The CHURCH of this long exalted land may “ find favor in the eyes of her Lord” amidst the universal ruin ! That for her “ faithful witnesses an ark of divine protection may be found, which shall bear them up amidst the lashing violence of the billows, till it rest at length in safety on a new Ararat ;—when, the tumultuous waters shall subside—the bow of God’s faithfulness shall span the firmament, and a regenerate population be summoned to take possession of “ new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness !”



THE DISSERTATION.

“Cum multæ res in philosophia nequaquam satis adhuc explicatæ sint, tum perdifficilis, Brute, (quod tu minime ignoras) et perobscura quæstio est de natura Deorum; quæ et ad agnitionem animi pulcherrima est, et ad moderandam religionem necessaria. De qua tam variæ sunt doctissimorum hominum, tamque discrepantes sententiæ, ut magno argumento esse debeat, causam, id est, principium, philosophiæ, esse [inscientiam,] prudenterque Academicos a rebus incertis assensionem cohibuisse. Quid est enim temeritate turpius? aut quid tam temerarium, tamque indignum sapientis, gravitate atque constantia, quam aut falsum sentire, aut, quod non satis explorate perceptum sit et cognitum, sine ulla dubitatione defendere?”

CICERO. DE NAT. DEOR.



THE DISSERTATION.

“Without metaphysics, science could have had no language, and common sense no materials.

“From all we know of the *un*metaphysical tribes of New Holland and elsewhere, a common sense not preceded by metaphysics is no very enviable thing.”

COLERIDGE.

EXORDIUM.

THE idea of loving truth, for its own sake has in it something so lofty and ennobling, that even those, who are practically uninfluenced thereby, cannot regard it without a transient emotion of reverence. The men of the world, though engaged in the engrossing pursuits of business or pleasure, not unfrequently look on the scholar or the philosopher with a kind of respect, analogous to that with which they would gaze at the high priest of a divinity far removed from their apprehensions. He is, or he ought to be, the votary of Truth ; and their respect for him is but an instinctive homage to the Truth itself.

There are, indeed, but few men who would not feel offended by the insinuation, that they were deficient in the “love of truth,” and yet it can be no secret, that narrow considerations of “utility” possess the minds of the many, almost to the exclusion of nobler

motives ; and that, to adopt the language of a great writer of the last century, " truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few."

The majority of men, instead of examining for themselves, generally learn by rote a code of borrowed opinions. Free-thinking (in the best sense of that abused word) is far from being the " epidemic evil of these times ;" for those methods of thought which happen to be in fashion are adopted by most men without hesitation. They can, therefore, ill endure to have their notions laid bare by any criticism, lest they should be driven to the hard necessity of thinking for themselves. Such, at least, are the conclusions to which I have come, from the conviction, that men who were candid enquirers after truth would not object to have their opinions on all subjects freely canvassed : and whether such candid enquirers are often to be met with, every man's own observation must decide.

If, for instance, some common subject, connected with any branch of what is called Metaphysical, or even Moral, Science, be introduced among men who would reckon themselves, " intellectual," and are perhaps very well informed on the common topics of human knowledge—how will it be received?—I need hardly answer ; although this supposed subject is intimately connected with the most exalted truths which mind can contemplate, yet it will generally happen, that from one, and another, and another, of these " truth-loving" persons, the murmur will arise, and prevail, — " Abstruse subject !" " Imperfect human faculties !" — " Cui bono ?" and the pre-

sumptuous THINKER will soon find nine-tenths of his company against him.

The evident tendency of this unwillingness to think, is, to make men contented with ignorance, to unfit the mind for everything nobler than worldly interests, or to create hard thoughts of the Deity on account of the unhappy condition of our race. It represents the life of man as a hopeless enigma, which death itself may not solve. By a strange inconsistency, the very men who tell us, "these reasonings lead to nothing," and complain of the "darkness and uncertainty of metaphysics," are the first to raise an outcry against any one who may try to strike a light in the darkness. But should we not think better of the goodness of the Deity, and of the power of the human mind, than to believe that we are immured in this world as in a dark dungeon, endowed with an irrepressible but vain desire of beholding the light of day?

While we sit still, said an old philosopher, we are never the wiser, but going into the river, and moving up and down is the way to discover its depths and shallows. But this requires exertion which few will make, since it is so much easier to throw discredit on all mental efforts! Indeed, up to a very recent date, there has been a growing inaptitude for what is termed, "the science of mind." Nor can it be wondered at, that the generality are well pleased to acquiesce in the decision, that correct thinking is an impossibility. It brings down all to one pleasant level, and casts blame on none. "Feebleness," says Coleridge, "is always plausible, for it favors mental

indolence ;"—“ feebleness, in the disguise of confessing and condescending strength is always popular.” But, if a “love of truth” were as general as the profession of it, should we witness such reluctance to put forth the energies of the mind? Should we tolerate these complaints of “difficulty,” and pinings after “utility?”¹

When the Stagyrte was asked, why the presence of the beautiful tires not? he replied, “that is the question of a blind man.” And to those who inquire, Why truth is sought after, except as the servant of worldly utility?—we may indignantly answer, It is the question of an animal, and not of a man! And are there not many whose actions might be interpreted into a question like this? But as there is wisdom at times, “in becoming all things to all men,” so, in respect to the present discourse, I solicit not the patient ear of any man on the ground that a knowledge of truth is in itself a “joy that passeth understanding,” but on the more tangible ground, that the subject of this Dissertation is of high practical importance to all who do not think Theology to be vain theory, and Religion an empty dream.

A long consideration of the modern “Doctrine of Final Causes,” and of that “Natural Theology,” of which it is the declared basis, has led to the conclusions which I have here attempted to establish. I have become deeply persuaded that Revelation must be defended on far higher grounds than those which

¹ How few will understand the spirit of Mde. De Stael's, “Oh! que j'aime l'inutile.”

are usually taken. My design, therefore, is, to set forth, in the clearest manner, that though atheism is an impossibility, and irreligion misery, yet that man, by his unassisted natural powers, could never have certainly determined any one truth of theology or religion. I would have the Deist left to his own theological resources, that the futility of his attempts might show him the necessity of revelation. I would prove that a strictly natural theology is unattainable; so that all men, who feel that some theology is indispensable, may be unable to avoid the conclusion in favour of Revelation. Some Christians may be alarmed at an attack on "natural" religion, but this I cannot but attribute to very partial views of the subject, or to the indefinite manner in which the phrase is used. If, by "natural religion," or theology, any one means to imply such a knowledge of God and truth, as may be gained, apart from Christianity, by the guesses of enlightened conscience, or by the help of traditional revelation, and those traces of primitive truth which are to be found in all ages;—I only reply, that such a theology cannot properly be called "natural," and cannot be what the Deists mean, when they employ that term. They are, of course, bound to defend a theology which has nothing *super-natural* about it. When I say, then, that I deny the possibility of a natural theology, I mean the theology of a mere Deist,—the conclusions whereof are *deducible from premises* in as strict a manner as conclusions concerning any other natural truths. If the stern objections which lie against the creed of the Deists were clearly apprehended, we should not find these

men exclaiming against and rejecting Christianity as the religion of the credulous; nor should we so often witness that complacent falling back on a pretended "rational belief" in God, which is the popular resort of modern "reasoners." Be it observed, that I do not deny the "light of nature," as it is called, (*i. e.* natural conscience) to be a *guide* to religion; but I deny that it is any thing *more* than a guide. It is not the thing itself. I most readily allow, that MORALITY is a strict natural science, concerning the relations between man and man, and the eternal laws of right and wrong which give rise to those relations. I allow, too, that moral science¹ may be attained by examining the facts of our moral nature. But Religion implies something *more* than morality: it introduces a new class of relations, *viz.* those which subsist between man and God: and I venture to affirm, that, although natural conscience may lead a man to feel the want of some religion, it will not teach him the precise nature of religious obligation; neither will natural reasoning be able to prove, with certainty, ANY SINGLE THEOLOGICAL TRUTH; even the unity or personality of God, or the reasonableness of worship: all which points are indispensable to religion. So that if any such science as Natural Theology were possible, it is yet too large a demand on our "credulity" to expect us to admit it, before the data are produced on which it is founded. And no such data have yet been shown. The scanty materials of the Natural Theologians are

¹ Very different from Dr. Paley's system.

not sufficient for the structure which they would raise. Their premises do not justify their conclusions.

But I would at once anticipate an objection which will be raised by many, which is this : ‘ Why should we attempt to make men dissatisfied with *any* arguments which prove, or seem to prove, truths ; and especially truths of such importance as those of theology ? ’ To which I answer : That if there were not, as there are, many other reasons, this is sufficient,—That it is impossible to foresee the consequences of enlisting error in the service of truth. For my own part, I feel sure that the truth cannot require such service. But, farther : It may be seen, that the consequences have already been of the most disastrous kind ; of which any Christian may judge, who will reflect on the arrogant pretensions of our modern Natural Theologians.

As the most recent work on the subject, I would refer to Lord Brougham’s Introductory Discourse to Paley’s well-known Treatise. The comparative claims of Natural and Revealed religion are there stated in the following terms :

“ We assert, that it is a vain and ignorant thing to suppose, that Natural Theology is not necessary to the support of Revelation. *The latter may be untrue, though the former be admitted !* It may be proved or allowed” [which, by the way, are very different things,] “ that there is a God, though it be denied that he sent any message to man through men, or other intermediate agents ; as indeed the Epicureans believed in the existence of *the Gods*, but held them to keep wholly aloof from human affairs,

leaving the world, physical as well as moral, to itself, without the least interference in its concerns. *But Revelation cannot be true, if Natural Religion is false*, and cannot be demonstrated strictly by any argument, or established by any evidence, without proving, or *assuming* the latter!"¹—p. 204.

Now there is certainly a roundness and completeness in this statement, which obviates the necessity of my making quotations at a greater length. If any one, after reading this, is yet disposed to think the claims of the Natural Theologians harmless, or their fictitious science friendly (or, as they affirm, *necessary*) to Revelation, I would have him reflect on the unavoidable *consequences* of his concession. For I own, that I myself had strong suspicions of this Natural Theology before I perceived its inevitable

¹ In proof of these bold propositions, Lord Brougham, goes on to put a case, in which he charitably *supposes*, "all the ordinary difficulties in the way of Revelation to be got over." And he declares that if a messenger could in our own days, be incontrovertibly *proved* to be "sent immediately from heaven," and work miracles before our own eyes, we could not rely on the truth of his Doctrine. Lord Brougham would, it seems, carry his scepticism so far as to dispute the truth of a doctrine revealed with all this evidence, "because a being capable of working miracles may be well capable of deceiving us. The possession of power does not of necessity exclude either fraud or malice!" Now, in this case, a more unfortunate excuse for unbelief could not have been found; for by the very hypothesis, Lord B. allows that the said messenger was *proved* incontrovertibly "to be sent *immediately from heaven*;" on what, then, does his Lordship ground his suspicion of possible "fraud and malice?" I should have thought that his coming "from heaven," was quite inconsistent with Lord B.'s suspicion of his being a deputy from some power of "great malignity." But further, Lord B. remarks, "The miracles of Jesus," (such are *his* words) "were attributed to

consequences. Let it be admitted, that Natural Religion must be thus established on independent grounds, before Revelation of any kind can even be examined ; then,

The first consequence must be,—That this Natural Religion may be constituted as a TEST by which Revelation is to be tried. This consequence is inevitable. Because, no Doctrine of Revelation must be understood in any sense which does not accord with the truths of Natural Religion ; for these are supposed to be *previously* established, and are, on this hypothesis, the foundation of all Religion ! And therefore, whatever opposes them, must be rejected—either openly denied or explained away. To illustrate my meaning, and show that this is no imaginary danger, let any allowed truth of Revelation be taken, in order to make the trial ; as, for instance, “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” Now, if Natural Theologians should be of opinion, as they sometimes have been, that this doctrine interferes with some of the truths of their Natural Re-

evil beings.” True ; but our Saviour declared that insinuation to be “sin against the *Holy Spirit*” which could not be forgiven “in this world, or that which is to come,” and yet of this very blasphemy of which the Pharisees were guilty, Lord B. coolly remarks, “their argument was not at all unphilosophical !” But I must take the liberty of differing from his Lordship ; I have yet to discover that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost has any thing “philosophical” about it ; unless it be philosophical to attribute benevolent miracles to a “being of great malignity.” Lord B.’s pompous Demonstration may therefore be annihilated by those words of meek wisdom, from him “who spoke as never man spake,” whose simple rule, for discerning false and true prophets was, “by their *fruits*, ye shall know them !”

ligion—or is repugnant to some of the attributes with which they clothe their imaginary Deity, it *must* be rejected. If, to use Lord Brougham's example, a Natural Theologian have decided with Epicurus, that God "holds himself aloof from human affairs and leaves the world, physical as well as moral, to itself, without the least interference in its concerns;" will it not seem repugnant to all reason to suppose him to accept a sacrifice for human sins? Or if, according to the Socinians, it be concluded, that sacrifices are in themselves absurd, and unacceptable to the God of Natural Theology, can we suppose him to accept the sacrifice of his Eternal SON, who even assumed human nature, for the express purpose of becoming a sacrifice! So that, in either of these cases, the "doctrine of the Atonement," might be rejected, if Natural Religion were the TEST by which Revelation was tried. From all which it is easy to see,

The second "consequence" of this concession, viz., That Revelation will be degraded, (by being brought to the level of Natural Religion) and be thus shown to be wholly *superfluous*. This consequence can no more be avoided than the other. Because, if Revelation and Naturalism be in any matter opposed to each other, the one or the other must compromise its claims; for contradictories cannot both be true. If Revelation make the compromise, then it forfeits all right to be considered as the message of the God of TRUTH. And, in this case, it shows itself to be wholly *superfluous*, as well as partly false. But, if Naturalism should yield, then

the very foundations on which all Religion (even Revelation itself, according to this hypothesis) is built, are shown to be fallacious!

It is very easy to comprehend how it is, that avowed Infidels befriend this Natural Theology. It answers their purpose in two ways: it undermines Christianity, and supplies its enemies with a reputable, though hollow substitute; for, by the incompleteness and fallacy of its arguments, it introduces doubt on those very points which it pretends to establish. But it is not so easy to explain the strong affection which some Christians express for this unsubstantial theory. Is it, that they suppose *facts* to be strongly in favour of it? Then, surely, it is not too much to expect that they will point out, at least, some *one* purely Natural Theologian in the history of the world. I own that I cannot find one. Let any Christian calmly peruse any of the best treatises¹ of the ancients,—even those who had the light of a traditional revelation to guide them,—and he may find his admiration of nature's efforts in the field of theology considerably abated. Let him read that noble dialogue of Plato, wherein the dying Socrates hardly rises higher than a wish,—a hope,—a *guess*, concerning the life to come! Let him not take the hackneyed quotations² of doubtful or obscure passages from the

¹ I say "Treatises," not *passages*. Dr. Cudworth's great work is a monument of learning and research; but it is not what some seem to consider it, a substitute for Plato. It is not a fountain of all philosophy.

² See the Notes to Lord Brougham's Discourse,

ancients, which are no otherwise worthy of notice than as glimmerings of light amidst palpable darkness; let him read the continuous work of any sage or poet in all antiquity,—and though he may find, here and there, a line that glitters like a crystal on a heap of pebbles,—he will need no argument of mine to convince him of the truth of the declaration of the learned apostle: “The world by wisdom knew not God!”

It is time that I now proceed to develop more fully the nature of my argument.

There are generally conceived to be two distinct methods by which any truth may be proved: the *à priori*, or synthetical method, and the *à posteriori*, or analytical¹; concerning which (though somewhat common topics) I hope I may be excused for offering a few preliminary remarks, as they will be of importance throughout this Dissertation. The words Analysis and Synthesis are borrowed from the Greek geometers, and are applied, by analogy, to the different modes of proof and investigation used in both mental and physical science. Some of our late writers, in their inordinate zeal for the principles of a mechanical philosophy, have endeavoured to prove that all reasoning is analytical, by showing that every argument is necessarily founded on such principles, and such only as have been previously established by an analytical examination of facts. But this seems about as logical as to attempt to show, on the other hand, that all reasoning is synthetical, be-

¹ See, on this subject, a laborious and heavily-written section, vol. iii. p. 374, of Prof. D. Stewart's “Philos. of H. Mind.”

cause all the general laws, and first principles of intellect and sense, must be assumed, *à priori*, before we can commence the analysis of facts.¹ It appears that every one is conscious that he is, at times, more intuitively or immediately certain of a principle than of the consequences to be deduced from it; and, at such times, he begins with the principle, as that which is best known, and argues *from* it "synthetically." At other times, certain facts or consequences are most immediately evident, and are therefore taken as premises, from which to argue *to* the principle "analytically." It cannot, therefore, be thought a sign of metaphysical clearness of conception, to dispute the *fact*—that there are these two distinct methods of reasoning.

And further; we may, perhaps, perceive that there is a difference in nature, between truths which are known to us in modes so essentially diverse.

The whole universe of things, so far as we are or can be acquainted therewith, seems to consist of two classes of being, the SUBJECTS, and the OBJECTS of knowledge; which, for the sake of clearness, we may call PERCEIVING beings, and PERCEIVED beings—the knowing and the known:—Of the *essence* of either we can ascertain nothing beyond the fact, that the one is such that it perceives and knows; and the other is such that it is perceived and known.² Now the contemplation of these two classes of universal being,

¹ "ἡ μὲν γὰρ [διδασκαλία] δι' ἐπαγωγῆς, ἡ δὲ συλλογισμῶν. ἡ μὲν δὲ ἐπαγωγή ἀρχή ἐστι καὶ τὴ καθόλου, ὁ δὲ συλλογισμὸς ἐκ τῶν καθόλου."—Aristot. Eth. ad Nic. l. 6. c. 3.

² "Their *esse* is *percipi*."—Princip. of H. Knowledge. Berkeley.

has led me to perceive, that truth is also two-fold : that is to say, that there are, first, truths of reason, and secondly, truths of sense.¹ And as the direct testimony of our senses (to speak figuratively) is the test of truths of the second class ; so the direct testimony of mind, is the test of truths of the first class. Of truths of reason, we have a kind of *à priori* consciousness previous to all proof.² They are perceived by a direct aspect of the mind. Such are those absolutely necessary and immutable truths which depend in no respect on the existence of any thing else. Of which kind are the truths of mathematics, of morals,³ and (as I doubt not) the essential truths of Christianity. But a "truth of sense" is, on the other hand, con-

¹ See Cudworth, Wollaston, &c., and Kant.

² A man is said to be "conscious" of his own existence; he believes it, of course, *à priori*, previous to all proof. But yet this affirmation, "I exist," should not strictly be called a "truth of reason," in the *highest* sense of the word; because the supposition of any particular being having never existed at all, would not "imply a mathematical contradiction." Not that our own existence is therefore to be thought a "truth of sense;" for it is believed "*à priori*," and may be conceived wholly apart from the senses, which, in every respect, are subsequent, and not prior, to mind. Perhaps this truth, and those which depend on it, may be well called "*particular* truths of reason," in opposition to others, which are universal and absolute. And further, observe; that if mind, i. e., some thinking being, must be assumed first of all—if mind is the subject which has truth for its object—if mind is the centre of a circle of truth—it will follow, that from the existence of eternal truths, we may argue the necessity of an eternal mind.

³ In proof of this, see Cudworth's masterly "Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality;" and the learned Wm. Wollaston's Religion of Nature; both which, in the *moral* conclusions, are unanswerable.

tingent and mutable. It cannot have an absolute but only a *relative* necessity of existence. It might, by a possibility, have been otherwise than it is. A perfect recognition of such a truth is called an act of "understanding;" for, in understanding, we "judge according to the sense."¹ Now, there is no more room for scepticism concerning this latter class of truths than concerning the former, as will abundantly appear by considering, that we have, in each case, the best evidence which the nature of the matter admits.

"Truths of reason" being superior to all proof, and known by the intuition of nature, or revelation, have the highest of all evidence, and are called "demonstrable." They cannot even be imagined to be possibly otherwise than they are; for they are eternal, and "absolutely necessary." But "~~truths of sense,~~" (and, indeed, all particular truths also) are only *relatively* necessary. (See Part ii. sec. 3.) "Truths of sense" admit of being proved at the bar of reason; because they might have been otherwise than they are. Therefore, the evidence for them is said to be "probable." And this distinction between demonstrative and probable evidence should be very carefully observed. I repeat, then, that a truth is *demonstratively* established, as "absolutely necessary," when it appears, that it is a contradiction in the nature of things to imagine it otherwise. A truth has the very highest *probable* evidence, when it is proved, in an irrefutable manner, from the evidence of our senses, from testimony or any other of the sensible

¹ See Leighton, Coleridge, &c.

means of human knowledge. The term "probable" does not necessarily imply any degree of uncertainty.¹

Unless we know to which of the two classes any truth belongs, we cannot tell what kind of evidence is to be expected to support it. The first truths of Theology have been defended both *à priori* and *à posteriori*; i. e., both by demonstrative and probable arguments. Perhaps no one has employed the former with such ingenuity as Dr. Clarke.² And, indeed, if the truths of Theology be eternal, immutable and necessary truths (which seems undeniable, if they be admitted at all), it would appear reasonable to regard them as "demonstrable," *à priori*, to intelligences capable of apprehending them; and the only doubt might be, whether they might not transcend the natural capacity of the human mind? It is certain that Dr. Reid, Professor Stewart, and their followers, regard the argument *à priori*, merely as the "speculation of men of genius," the soundness of which is much to be suspected; at the same time, strangely overlooking the fact, that eternal and necessary truths *must* be also "demonstrable." With these writers, the argument *à posteriori* is much more popular, and the generality of men have, doubtless, the same predilection. Which might, indeed, be expected, as it is much easier to avail one's self of what comes within the province of sense and understanding, than

¹ For many of these observations, I may refer to Dr. Cudworth and others; and still later to Kant and Coleridge.

² Many of Clarke's able contemporaries also adopted it. It is indeed, as old as Lactantius.

to exert the reason in contemplating lofty truths. The popular form in which the argument *à posteriori* is generally put, is this : Its advocates represent it as an " argument from design," or, as it is commonly called, "an argument from Final Causes." But a close attention to the real nature of an argument from final causes will discover, that it is not a correct *à posteriori* process.

A very common way of stating this argument is this ; — " From certain marks of contrivance or design, which may be traced in the works of nature, we may, by the light of nature alone, infer a contriver, a God." Before entering immediately on the consideration of this position, it may be observed, that the truth of the doctrine here laid down is meant to depend on the principle, That we may argue from effect to cause. And, without question, the *à priori* and *à posteriori* arguments must both depend on the validity of this principle ; and in order to examine this, it will be necessary to inquire, — What is a CAUSE ?

Believing that much evil results from partial views of this subject, I have attempted to investigate the whole matter ; not with a view of bringing forward, or criticising, instances of " Final Causes," but in order to examine the foundations of the argument *from them* ; and thus determine the whole amount of the *value* of such an argument. In so doing, I shall endeavour to bring all doctrines and opinions to the simple test of the consciousness and experience of every man's mind ; believing, that if there be one thing of which we may be more certain than another,

it must be that which exists within ourselves, and is, as it were, a part of us. It is evident, as I shall frequently take occasion to enforce, that if any doubt or uncertainty be thrown on the operations of intellect, knowledge will become impossible and reasoning absurd. This, then, is my only POSTULATE, which I am the more explicit in stating, because I am sure that its importance cannot be overrated ;—

Let it be granted ; THAT THE FACTS OF THE HUMAN MIND,¹ ARE SUFFICIENT DATA FOR THE SCIENCE OF THE HUMAN MIND ; AND THE IMPORTANT TRUTHS DEPENDENT THEREON.

As the admission of this Postulate will lead to more practical consequences, than are apparent at first sight, I would have it very cautiously inspected. Let it not be considered as identical with the proposition of Mr. Hume, that all our knowledge is derived from Experience. It is very different. This proposition, which Hume borrowed from Mr. Locke, is not indeed to be regarded as false, but, rather, as ambiguous ;² but there is one part of its ambiguity (so to speak) which has not, as far as I am aware, been fully detected. If there be, as we have seen, certain necessary truths of reason, prior to truths of sense, which depend on no “experience” for their substantial verity, what can be more unreasonable than

¹ If any one prefers to substitute the word *Nature* for the word “Mind,” in both the places in the Postulate where it occurs, I see no great objection to it. I have said “Mind,” from having considered Body as one of the phenomena of mind ; and also considering the word “Nature” as inapplicable to intelligent beings.

² Which has been well exposed by the Archbishop of Dublin.

to attempt to apply to them the test of sensible experience? And yet this is the very mistake of Mr. Hume and his fellow-disciples of the school of Locke. It is impossible that sensible experience could teach me that the three angles of a triangle are necessarily equal to two right angles. I might know, from sensible experience, that I always found it to be so, and thence I might infer¹ as a highly *probable* truth, that it might be so, in future. But a single glance of the reasoning mind perceives, at once, the higher truth—the truth of reason—necessary and immutable; it *MUST* be so. Perhaps, most of the fallacies of the Sceptics of the last century may be traced to an oversight of the *fact*, that there *are* “Truths of Reason.”

But it may be said, that all the operations of the mind may be called “Experiences” for we could not know that we had power, even to think, unless we had previously exerted it, and so obtained knowledge of it by experience. Now even if it be true, that in this sense, all our knowledge is derived from “experience,” it does not alter what has been said, concerning the necessary and immutable character of “Truths of Reason.” For, if it be granted that we learn by experience that $2 \times 2 = 4$ it is evident that that truth is in no way *affected* by our experience of it. It is immutably and necessarily true, and would have been so, had no being ever existed to learn it by “experience.” But there is an objection to this manner of using the word “experience,” arising from the

¹ I first met with this idea, I think, somewhere in the writings of Coleridge.

fact, that it is generally applied to *historical* experiences,¹ and not to intellectual. The truths of Understanding may therefore be said to become known by experience ; and it might be well to confine the word to them. For it may certainly be doubted, whether truths of reason are always first communicated to the mind by experience, because they are apprehended so fully and perfectly at *once*, that they would not become more sure, if we had an eternity of “Experience” of them. And further, it is very plain, that they are, by their very nature, superior to all experience, being eternal truths. Therefore, as we may argue from experience, with respect to truths of understanding ; so with respect to truths of reason, we may argue from the very necessity of the case. It will now be seen, that when I say, that the “facts of the human mind” are sufficient data for the science of it, I do not mean only the facts of sensible experience, but also the facts of necessary and immutable being. If there should seem to be a peculiarity in the manner in which I have used the word, “fact,” I would remark, that I have adopted it in order to inculcate more forcibly that all real science, whether metaphysical or physical, must rest on this same basis. Whatever really exists—whether necessarily or relatively—may be called a “fact.” A statement concerning the nature of a number of facts, is called a “Doctrine” (when it is considered absolutely, as truth) and a “Law” (when it is considered *relatively* to an intelligence ordaining or receiving it.) Whatever may be affirmed universally of the human mind

¹ See Mr. Hume’s Dialogues and Essays.

whether educated or not, I consider to be a "fact of the human mind;" as that which may be affirmed universally of physical nature may be termed a fact of physical nature; (such, for instance, as "Gravitation.") But neither in physics nor in metaphysics can any general conclusion be deduced from a particular fact. It would, however, render all science impossible to dispute universal, or even widely-general facts. And none, indeed, (except some few metaphysicians) have been guilty of this extravagance. And it surely must not appear surprising, that such reasoners have arrived at no certain knowledge; inasmuch as they begin by a dogged and universal Scepticism.

Assuming the truth of our Postulate, I now shall proceed in the following order:

I.—⁽¹⁾ I shall first consider the question of Causation generally, and critically; that I may arrive at a definition of the true idea of a CAUSE. This will lead to a decision on the nature of the connexion of Cause and Effect.

⁽²⁾ And as it is plain, that no principles can be a good basis for Theological science, which are inconsistent with practical Religion, that Doctrine of Causation which will be at this point established will be applied to Morals, in order to illustrate the Free Agency of man. After this parenthetical section

⁽³⁾ We shall open the consideration of the modern "Doctrine of Final Causes" by comparing it with the ancient doctrine of the same name.)

II.—The second part of this dissertation will be occupied by the examination

(¹) Of the Theological argument from Final Causes ; in order to shew its fallacy :

(²) Of the argument *à posteriori*, (which is frequently confounded with the arguments from " Final Causes)" and

(³) Of the argument *à priori* ; in order to ascertain their precise value : the former of which, as being the more popular, will occupy the larger share of our attention.

III.—In the third part I shall endeavour,

(^{1. 2.}) To establish the Theological Doctrine of Final Causes on the more accurate principles of the ancients ; and shew the legitimate use of the modern doctrine ; and

(³) I shall, finally, vindicate the position that the Truths of Revelation are eternal and necessary truths of Reason "spiritually discerned" i.e. not cognizable by sense.

PART I.

OF CAUSATION.

“Hi omnes motus regulares originem non habent ex Causis mechanicis. Elegantissima hæcce Solis Planetarum et Cometarum compages, non nisi consilio et dominio Entis Intelligentis et Potentis oriri potuit.”
NEWTON, SCH. GEN.

“Δοκει γαρ πλειον ἢ ἡμῖν τε παντος εἶναι ἡ ἀρχή, καὶ πολλὰ συμφανη γινώσθαι δι’ αὐτῆς τῶν ζητουμένων.”
ARISTOT.

SECTION I.

THE THEORY.

THE DOCTRINE of CAUSATION, in its simplest and most generalized form, may be briefly stated thus: That there is throughout nature a constant series of events, seeming to depend on each other—the subsequent on the antecedent; the former, of any two events, being commonly denominated the CAUSE, the latter, the EFFECT.

The greatest difference of opinion has prevailed with respect to this Doctrine; and more especially as to the extent to which it is admissible.

There are many (and perhaps the majority of mankind are of their opinion) who allow, fully, of the ap-

plication of the doctrine to physical subjects ; but extend their views, and often, indeed, their enquiries, no further. They believe this Doctrine of Causation to be a sound basis, whereon to erect Theological Science, without entertaining the previous question—Whether the admission of the *Principle* of Causation be consistent with the existence of Religion and Morality ? The opponents of this party are chiefly of two kinds : 1st, Those who admit the Doctrine and deny its sufficiency ; and 2ndly, Those who deny the Doctrine itself—dispute the reality of the connexion of Cause and Effect—and therefore, as they suppose, the possibility of arguing with certainty from one to the other.

But there is a large party who have almost confined their views to the moral bearings of this doctrine, conceiving, that however admissible the Law of Causation might be in physics, it was wholly subversive of morals, and consequently to be opposed, at all risk. They allege, that the close and necessary connexion of Moral Causes and Effects would detract from the voluntary character of human action, and so destroy all distinctions of virtue and vice. Their opponents, on the contrary, maintain the very reverse of this proposition. They conceive, that one event follows another as regularly in the moral as in the physical world ; and, that to reject the notion of Moral Causation, would annihilate all connexion between MEANS and END, and thus render virtue and vice so much a matter of chance, as to be difficult, if not wholly unattainable.

These are some of the chief controversies on this

extensive subject; and I am persuaded that they have arisen, to a great extent, from the ambiguity of the word CAUSE, as any one may see by even re-perusing the preceding page. I say not this, in order to mimic the style of the whole crowd of writers, who, from the days of Locke to our own, have delighted in such complaints; much less to shelter myself, by casting the blame of my own obscurity of thought, upon the unavoidable defects of language—but because I am most anxious to convey truth in words not to be misunderstood; and to do this, I must first hunt out established sophistry from its wordy lurking-places.

I suppose it will not be denied that words are meant to convey ideas; if, then, the same word be employed to signify several distinct ideas, all clearness of conception will become impossible. That this has introduced much of the doubt and dispute, concerning the subject which we are about to examine, will not I think need much proof. It is a fact of which every one may judge.

A boy at school, in the ordinary routine of his studies, works the first problem in Euclid. The result of his operations is placed before us,—the Equilateral Triangle. If it be now asked, ‘What is the cause of this effect?—this triangle?’—It is probable, that no two persons would give the same answer. One might say, that the two intersecting circles, &c., are the cause; and it would be true. Another might declare, the rule, pencil, and compasses, to be the cause; a third might consider the boy himself as the only real cause.

Now observe ; these three persons would use the word Cause in three senses : they would mean three essentially *different* things, though they would employ one and the same term. The first would assign the cause, or REASON, in the nature of things, from which the triangle resulted ; the second would speak of the cause, or INSTRUMENT ; and the third, of the cause, or AGENT,—the “ Efficient Cause” of the schoolmen.

But this is not all : so loosely has this word come to be used, that, according to some, every motive that influenced the mind of the boy might be called a remote “ cause” of the triangle : as, the fear of punishment,—the example of others—the desire of knowledge—emulation, and the like. And still farther ; every use to which the triangle might afterwards be put, was a “ cause” why it should be made. Thus the second problem might be fantastically called a cause for the first : and so, for this simple triangle, causes might be assigned almost ad infinitum.

Nor can it be said, that any one may immediately perceive in what *sense* a word is used, by observing the general drift and bearing of the sentence in which it occurs. Experience proves, that, as latitude in the signification of words gives rise to sophisms in philosophy, so men’s ears, by this colloquial usage, become accustomed to inaccuracy, and many an error escapes detection. Thus a fallacy, somewhat similar to the following, is by no means uncommon : for the sake of exposing its weakness, I will exhibit it in the syllogistic form of the logicians.

(Major.—The cause of any thing is accountable for it.

Minor.—Motives are the *cause* of human action.

Conclusion.—Therefore the motives (and not the man) are accountable.

It may be a matter of wonder with some, whether such a syllogism ever satisfied any one; and yet such is but the real statement of the common-place objection of the "Free Thinker"—"Why am I accountable for actions which are *caused* by motives¹ beyond my control?" The objection, such as it is, rests on the evident truth,—that no man is accountable for that of which he is not the cause. But the fault of the argument consists in an *ambiguous* middle term. The word Cause is used in the major premiss, to signify a real, efficient cause; otherwise, no one would admit that proposition. In the minor, it signifies the occasion, or reason of an action. Now, if a man were told that he was not accountable for an action, "if he had any *reason* for it," he would suspect his informant for a fool rather than a logician. Yet such is the meaning, if it has any, of this objection against man's accountability. It rests on the ambiguity of the word Cause.²

¹ See Sect. 2. on the ambiguity of the word Motive.

² The distinction between real and nominal causes is easily forgotten; and, yet, that there is a distinction, may plainly be seen. Thus a real cause may justly be the subject of praise or blame, as all men admit: but though an instrument may sometimes be *called* a cause, would it not be absurd, morally to praise or blame it? Or if, in common life, a man should say that he disliked sweet things, would it not be unfair for any one to declare, thereupon, that he abhorred music; which, by analogy, is sometimes *called* sweet?

It seems that, with this word, the world (whether properly or improperly) has been accustomed to connect the idea of EFFICIENCY; and thus, through pure inadvertency, a writer may use it in the premises of an argument in its secondary sense; and yet, in the conclusion, assume for it a higher meaning.

The ambiguity of which we are speaking, did not escape the observation of the ancient philosophers, who carefully distinguished between several sorts of Causes.¹ Plato, in the *Timæus*, makes a two-fold division of Causes, into the necessary, and the divine, which answer to the modern terms, natural and supernatural; under the latter of which, all intellect would be classed.² It is observable that with the Greeks the words αἰτία and ἀρχή were frequently used as synonymous, so that the exact idea of a Cause according to them was, a First principle, a beginning. Thus in the *Ethics* of Aristotle, for example, the same idea is conveyed by the two phrases “ἐἴ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐξῶθεν” and “ὅπου’ αὖν ἡ αἰτία ἐν τοῖς ἔκτοις.”³ But this strict meaning of the word Cause was, by no means, universally preserved among them, any more than among us. They sometimes, for instance, would use that word to designate any event which was antecedent to another. And this, as I conceive, explains the meaning of Plato in the

¹ As the ὅθεν ἡ κίνησις the ἐξ ἑνός, &c. of the Peripatetics.

² Plato, it seems, elsewhere gives this division of causes; the “id ex quo”—“id a quo”—“id quo”—“id ad quod” and “id propter quod.”—See Seneca, *Epist.* 65.

³ *Ethics* ad Nic. b. 3; C. I.

Parmenides, that throughout all nature one thing is for ever generating some other thing ; that is to say—Almost every thing is, in its turn, an ἀρχή, a beginning, a cause, to something else, though, in strict truth, there is but ONE Absolute Eternal Cause—το ἓν.

The loose and vague signification of this word was not of so mischievous a tendency among the ancients, as it is among us, because they took pains to avoid misconception, by scholastic definition. The four-fold division of Causes, of the Peripatetics, was exceedingly useful, in this respect, however objectionable in others. They perceived that there were at least four essentially different ideas expressed by the one word Cause, and they prevented the confusion of these ideas by introducing those distinctions which have received the scholastic names of Material, Formal, Efficient, and Final Causes.² A mere antecedent event, or an instrument, according to them would be a Material Cause ; a law of nature (which is an abstraction formed by the mind from the facts of nature) would be a Formal Cause ; a living agent

¹ Thus too the doctrine of Plato, that external nature has no absolute existence, in the highest sense of the word, but is ever in a state of change (which is but another version of the notion of Heraclitus, of a “perpetual flux”) intends amongst other things to teach, The constant procession of events from causes ; and this, in the opinion of Taylor, the modern Platonist, was the whole meaning of the ancient doctrine of ‘the continuous generation of things.’

² Dr. Reid seems strangely to deny that we have any modern idea correspondent to Material and Formal Causes !—*Essays on Act. Powers* I. Ch. 6 p. 460.

would be the Efficient Cause ; and the end or purpose to be answered, the Final Cause. ¹

But among us there are no such distinctions. It is true that we make use of such phrases as "First Cause" "Secondary Cause" "Immediate and Remote Cause"—but the meanings attached to them are so exceedingly indefinite, that they are of use only to the sophist. Not that I am, therefore, about to propose the re-introduction of the old scholastic phrases. They must be acknowledged to be sufficiently intricate and artificial ; nor should I have made mention of such trite details except for the sake of shewing what very distinct notions are expressed by the one word "cause," and how we are even more liable to be deceived by them than were the ancients.

It seems but reasonable to conclude that there may be some foundation in the nature of things for the prevalence of this same mode of expression in different languages ; otherwise, why should it have happened ? It appears that the human mind has a tendency to arrange the objects of its knowledge in classes ; hence it frequently happens that from some striking points of resemblance the same name may be appropriated to objects essentially different. As a familiar example of this incorrectness I would mention the word "priest" which means simply an elder—a presbyter of the christian church—and yet is now universally applied, even to the ministers of

¹ For the sake of illustration take a simple instance : I throw a stone on the ground. The material cause of the effect produced, is the impetus given ;—the formal cause is the law of gravitation ;—the efficient cause is, myself ;—the final cause is the purpose answered by the fallen stone.

pagan idolatry.¹ Thus it is not improbable that the word "Cause" would be applied to certain different ideas, on account of some resemblance or analogy between them. We will, therefore, attempt to decide what is the strict and proper notion of a true Cause, in reference to which, other things are, as it were figuratively, called Causes.

It would be an unpardonable affectation, however, wholly to pass over the labours of previous writers on this subject. Some notice of them, indeed, is rendered necessary, in order to see the present state of the question which we are discussing.

And here I would first of all observe, that the fact on which I have been dwelling—that the word Cause is used in many essentially different senses—has been practically overlooked by even the best of our writers on these subjects. Of all the acute metaphysicians which this country has produced since the Revolution, I know not one who has even tolerably attended to this fact, if we except Boyle, Locke, and Berkeley. To this remarkable circumstance must be attributed the acknowledged failure of their speculations; they produce no conviction in the mind of the reader, though he cannot tell why it is. He suspects a fallacy, even where he is unable to detect it: for, happily, false metaphysics do not often make a

¹ The church of Rome has made excellent use of the fallacy arising from this circumstance. The words *ἱερεύς* and *Πρεσβύτερος* being both translated by the same word, priest—they connect the idea of sacrifice with that English word, and thence take occasion to defend the sacrifice of the mass by declaring, "that Protestantism is the only religion which has priests without a sacrifice!"—See Whately.

permanent and successful inroad on the common sense of mankind. It is easy, however, to mark the plain consequence of forgetting the many and different meanings of one word ; the same definition of a word is deemed applicable wherever that word is used ; and when this is the case, it is not difficult to foresee the web of sophistries in which the inquirer will be involved. Even those who acknowledge the ambiguity of this word, "Cause," often proceed as if they had made no such acknowledgment. Some persons have that sort of simplicity which children have when they imagine, that a "confession" of error remedies all the mischiefs that result from it ; or, which older children manifest, when they seem to think, that by "plainly acknowledging" a fault, they may even gain credit for some analogous virtue.¹ Even the accurate J. Edwards makes an oversight almost amounting to this.² He seems even to make a parade of his strictness and carefulness, by advertising his reader, that he uses the word "Cause," to signify *any* antecedent, "either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which any event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not, &c." He actually thinks, that he is "careful in explaining his meaning," and "cuts off occasion for cavilling ;" by confessing, that he thus confounds the ideas of agent, instrument, occasion, antecedent, reason, &c., as if

¹ Thus a man acknowledges himself a "spendthrift" or "careless," hoping to be only thought *generous* or *liberal*.

² Enquiry, Part ii. sec. 3.

Confusion
of Cause
in Edwards

they were synonymous terms ! By acknowledging this indiscriminate use of the word Cause, he thinks that he acquires a right to use it in his premises and conclusions, just as it may suit him. But it will scarcely be conceded that a confession of confused language is a legitimate substitute for precision ; though, unquestionably, this appearance of candour in an author has a tendency to throw the reader off his guard. We are apt to allow of a certain liberty of expression, when a writer acknowledges it, just as we forgive the minor delinquencies of some men, when they have forewarned us, it is “ their way.” We shall have occasion to notice, as we proceed, some of the effects of such inaccuracy.

Mr. Hume may fairly be styled the first who called in question that vulgar opinion, which confessedly connects the idea of Efficiency with Causation. Professor D. Stewart, in one of his disparaging moods, disputes his claim to this honor, and produces a learned list of recondite passages from authors who had anticipated him.¹ Whatever opinion be formed concerning those passages, few persons will dispute that Mr. Hume was in reality the very first, at any rate, who improved upon the hints found in other authors, and denied the existence of Efficient Causes. In one thing, at least, the philosophers and the vulgar had agreed, from Pythagoras to Hume, namely in this—“ That whatever begins to be must have a cause.” This proposition Mr. Hume boldly called in question.

¹ Philos. of Human Mind, vol. i., note D.

He carefully examined¹ the arguments advanced in favor of it by Hobbes, Clarke and Locke, and maintained, that they take for granted in their premises the very position which they ought to prove. On the implied supposition that things may begin to be without a Cause,² he founded the doctrine, that we know nothing of the relation of what are called Causes and Effects, beyond the fact of their constant junction, and perhaps their apparent relative fitness. Dr. Reid, his laborious opponent, maintained that Dr. Clarke's proposition did not admit of proof, being "self-evident." He also clearly pointed out the atheistical tendency of Hume's doctrine; which truly requires but little pointing out. For if any thing could start from absolute nothing, and "begin to be" without a Cause, there could be no need of a Creator for the

¹ Treatise of Human Nature.

² I say, "the implied supposition;" for Mr. Hume does not *affirm* that nothing ever "begins to be," though he sometimes argues as if this were his hypothesis. I should be sorry to impute bad motives to any writer, or to seem blind to the manifold beauties of Mr. Hume's writings, or the real service which he has rendered to the cause of intellectual science; but I am bound to say, what I believe every honest seeker of truth will admit, that it is a favourite resource of Mr. Hume to argue, by enthymeme, and suppress a suspicious-looking premiss, even when his whole argument depends on it. For instance: When he examines the arguments of Clarke and others concerning the *a priori* proof of the being of God, he charges them with being guilty of a *petitio principii*, for assuming in either premises that things *begin* to be. Now, if he had boldly stated, that nothing ever "begins to be," the experience of every man would have contradicted him; because every man knows that different thoughts of his own mind and actions of his body are constantly "beginning to be." On this subject, see farther—note B. and also part ii. sect. 1. On lawful and unlawful assumptions.

world. But I would remind any one who already believes in a God, whether he be christian or deist, that with us, there can be no controversy on this subject; for the existence of the Creator cannot be admitted, without, at the same time, establishing the doctrine of Efficient Causation.

One of the latest and most elegant writers on metaphysics, Dr. Brown, has made a vigorous effort to revive Hume's doctrine. He exposed, in an able manner, some misconceptions which Reid had formed on this, as well as other subjects, and he endeavoured to shew, that scepticism was not the natural consequence of the denial of Efficient Causation. He considered that the *invariable* sequence of events made it just as possible to argue from one event to another, as if the most mystical efficiency were granted. By overlooking the word "invariable," and the certainty of every thing which it provides for, he thought that Reid had wholly mistaken the nature of Hume's doctrine.

The fallacy of this reply to Reid consists in this:—Hume's argument is grounded on the *past* invariability, which we gather from experience. He allows that there always *has been* a juxta-position of certain objects, but that does not prove that there always *will be*.¹ So that, the theory of both Hume and Brown is still to be considered chargeable with all the consequences of the most inveterate and unreasonable scepticism.

¹ Brown ascribes our belief in the *future* sequence of events to *intuition*. Hume to *custom*: both (mere abstractions) which may be fallacious.

Indeed Dr. Brown seems, unconsciously perhaps, to be the greater sceptic of the two. He has, certainly, gone a step farther than his careful master; though he occasionally differs from him, in unimportant particulars. In his "Enquiry into the relation of Cause and Effect," he seems to think that Hume has rather understated, than overstated, his argument. He even complains of him, for adding to his definition of a "Cause." That it has a kind of fitness to produce the effect.¹ According to Dr. Brown, "the *mere* relation of uniform antecedency is all that can be philosophically meant in the words power and causation." (Enquiry.) In his seventh lecture (written subsequently to "the Enquiry," he gives the following definitions of, what he calls the "three most important words in physics:"—

Power, is "immediate invariable antecedence."
 A Cause, is "the immediate invariable antecedent."
 An Effect, is "the immediate invariable consequent."

Now, if a writer chooses to use any word in a particular sense, and forewarns his reader of it, I see not what is to hinder him; but it surely is not a little strange that he should attempt to convince us that we do not understand our own meaning; that this particular sense, which he has discovered, is no other than that which every body admitted *without knowing it!* I am confident that I, for one, do not mean by these words what Dr. Brown says. Let us notice

¹ Mr. Hume's words are, that a cause is "*so united to its effect, that the idea of one determines the mind to form the idea of the other!*"

for a moment the first of these definitions, as the foundation of the rest. "Power," it is said, "is immediate invariable antecedence."¹ I would ask then with Dr. Reid, 'whether there is a power in the night to produce the day?'—for they stand in the relation of invariable and immediate antecedence and subsequence. Dr. Brown replied to this, that night and day were neither of them *wholes*—but each a series of parts. But I see not how this alters the case, except to make it still stronger against himself: for, the single instance of night and day may thus be broken up into a hundred parts, each of which would furnish an argument against the theory, that *mere* antecedence is power. It may also be further shown, that as we sometimes acknowledge antecedence where we do not acknowledge power—so, where we allow the existence of power, we intend thereby something essentially different from antecedence; as will shortly, I think, appear.

It is probable that our first idea of "power," or efficiency, admits of no analysis. Locke makes a twofold division of power;—into active and passive: but most persons will, I imagine, agree with Dr. Reid,—that the phrase "passive power" implies a contradiction. The introduction of such a phrase is, at any rate, unnecessary; for as the ideas of action and passion are essentially distinct, to call them both by one name would inevitably lead to much confusion. The notion thus entertained by Locke seems, indeed, to be nothing more than a revival of an old

¹ Thus Dr. Brown ventures even to affirm that the Will of God is *merely* the antecedent of Creation Lect. 7.

error of the Peripatetics, who spoke of motion as "the one act of the mover and the thing moved," without distinguishing cause from effect. But it is not for me to exhume departed errors, for the sake of exposing them. It is enough for the purposes of my argument, that every man, by examining his own mind, may find that he has an idea of power distinct from that of antecedence. This is, I own, my best argument. I build on the facts of the human mind. I appeal to every man's common sense, and ask—whether there be not some farther connexion between a living man and his actions, than between two stones that lie side-by-side in the quarry? Concerning this fact let every man judge for himself—*γυνθι σεαυτον*. For myself, I have no doubt in the matter. If I lift my hand, and strike my neighbour to the ground, I suspect that he would very justly take me to be something more than the "mere antecedent" of the event. The law, at any rate, would deal with me as an "efficient cause" of the mischief; and Dr. Brown himself could not explode my efficiency.¹

It may, perhaps, be thought, that I have dwelt quite long enough on this fanciful hypothesis. But men of genius have made it of so much consequence, that it must not be hastily dismissed. It is also of importance thus to connect Dr. Brown's theory with his confounding the many ideas which the word

¹ Dr. Brown argues against the absurdity of saying that "*will* has a power to move the arm." It is easy to invent a phrase for the sake of exposing it. No close thinker would be likely to use such language. The *agent* has the power.

Cause represents. It is true, that some antecedents are *called* causes; and this fact might partly deceive him;—and, from the examples which he gives, it seems certain that it did. I need hardly mention to any of his readers, his hacknied instance of the “spark and the gunpowder.” It is unfortunate that he did not oftener try his theory by some better test. We may readily allow, that all which we know in the case of the spark and the explosion of gunpowder is the fact of antecedence and subsequence; but are we, therefore, obliged to allow that there is no such thing as efficient agency in other cases which are not at all similar to this; as, for instance, that of a man and his actions? Dr. Brown’s theory, by overlooking the ambiguity of the word Cause, utterly destroys the very idea of an active cause, or agent, and leaves us a paradoxical universe of things acted upon, and nothing acting. Of the two definitions of causation, Mr. Hume’s is certainly the better; and its excellency lies in that very part to which his disciple objected. Hume was too cautious a writer not to allow, that the antecedence was of *such* a kind that the effect did not follow without it. But Dr. Brown, in his ambition to *improve* on his more accurate predecessor, does not seem to admit of any such fitness of the one event to precede the other; which, nevertheless, is a plain *fact*. It may well excite our surprise, that a system, directly opposed to the opinion of universal philosophy¹ and common sense, in all ages,—*i. e.* to all the facts of the human mind,

¹ It has been thought, indeed, the chief end of philosophy, to investigate causes. See Reid, Essay vi. C. 6.

—should have powerful and acute defenders in these days.

Let us now revert to that simple proposition from which we set out—which Plato and all the ancients, Locke and all the moderns admitted, (except the disciples of Hume,) viz., “That whatever begins to be must have a cause.” On this truth our whole doctrine depends; and this truth depends on our postulate, p. 46. There is but a short step from disputing the doctrine of Causation to denying the fact; but, fortunately, just as short is the process by which every man, from feeling that he himself is oftentimes more than a mere antecedent, (from being certain of the *fact* that he himself is often an efficient agent,) might decide on the truth of the doctrine of Causation.

Dr. Brown, in endeavouring to answer the arguments of Euler and D’Alembert, complains of the veneration with which men regard such grave mathematical terms as “scholium” and “corollary;” and hints, that sophisms pass undetected owing to these high-sounding names. I do not pretend to an extravagant reverence for mathematicians, and am quite disposed to admit that the learned apparatus with which they are surrounded is well suited to impress the vulgar with a very salutary idea of the importance of their science;—nay, it is possible, that some of their most recondite abstractions may look best at a distance. But, still, I cannot help thinking that our ambitious metaphysicians might be content with having *as solid* a foundation for their disquisitions as that on which the physical sciences rest.

Unless we really know something to begin with, we can never argue. We must proceed from things known—from experimental or from necessary¹ truth—the γνωριμα ἡμιν, or the γνωριμα ἀπλως—to things unknown. What Locke says of a man who disputes (or pretends to dispute) his own existence—"that to argue with him is absurd, as it is arguing with nothing,"—may be almost applied to the sceptic who disputes first principles. Whatever is traced to its origin in the human constitution, (*i. e.* in human beings as such,) is surely a fact from which we may safely argue. It is not the part of true philosophy either to deny facts, or to assign fanciful reasons for them. Hume, therefore, cannot be reckoned a philosopher, when he attempts to account for the fact of the universal prevalence of the idea of efficient causation, by imputing it to "the liveliness of our conceptions;" nor Brown, when he rejects this curious doctrine, (or rather disputes it,) and yet does not perceive (what we laid down at first as a postulate) "*that the facts of the human mind are sufficient data for the science of the human mind.*"

If the great masters of physical science had proceeded thus, we should still have been on the mere threshold of knowledge, disputing about words. Newton, taking for granted that every event has a cause,² lays down as the first Axiom of the Principia, that every body, whether in rest or motion, remains

¹ The γνωριμα ἡμιν are properly known by experience; but Mr. Hume disputes the existence of the γνωριμα ἀπλως.

² See the first page of the Principia.

for ever exactly as it is, unless its situation be altered by some external cause. This law he states in these words :—

“Corpus omne perseverare in statu suo quiescendi vel movendi uniformiter in directum, nisi quatenus illud, a viribus impressis, cogitur statum suum mutare.” The second law is equally in point :—
 “Mutationem motus proportionalem esse vi motrici impressæ, et fieri secundum lineam rectam qua vis illa imprimitur.” These laws, from which the motions of the whole planetary system are demonstrated, rely wholly on that PRINCIPLE which Newton thought self-evident, and which the followers of Hume refuse to admit, viz., that for every beginning of every new state of being there must be an efficient cause. And I really believe that one may be permitted to agree with Newton in this matter, without being chargeable with an undue reverence for the Mathematicians.

Of all the arguments in defence of this plain “Truth of Reason,” the profoundest, the fullest, and the best, is Dr. Clark’s.¹ To those who are dissatisfied with it, I would put this question: Supposing the proposition of Clark to be a Truth (and who will deny its possibility,) does it *admit* of any better and fuller proof than he has given? To me it seems an impossibility in the nature of things.

But the truths of Mathematics do not depend on doubtful abstract arguments.

The fact that bodies are naturally inert, and the

¹ Which is, in fact, the Argumentum ad absurdum, of which see Part II. sect. 3.

fact that they do really move, are deemed sufficient by the Mathematicians to justify them in speaking of the Inertia and the Motion of Bodies. To attribute these two opposites, inertia and motion, alike to the nature of body is impossible. By experiment they become convinced of the fact that body is inert, they therefore think it reasonable to ascribe the motion of body to something apart from itself, and to this something they give the name of Force, and say, that force is the cause of motion. Various as may be the theories to account for the operation of force on bodies, no one disputes the fact. According to Newton, the force having once communicated motion, the body, being naturally inert, would continue moving, and be unable to return, of itself, to a state of rest. “*Consistit hæc vis in actione solâ, neque post actionem permanet in corpore.*”—(Def. 4.) Torricelli, on the contrary—seeming to think that Body, being naturally inert, would instantly return to a state of rest—conceived that a “*cumulum quendam sive aggregatum virium impressarum*” was necessary, by a continued and instantaneous percussion, to keep the body moving. But both theories acknowledged the necessity of Force as a Cause of motion; and the latter even more than the former. Both depend on the supposition of an Efficient power distinct from the body to be moved; and neither would allow even the *acceleration* of the motion of a body without an adequate CAUSE.¹ This seemed a necessary truth; but what that cause might be, Newton ac-

¹ And the “acceleration of motion” may be well reflected on; as it oftener comes under our observation than a first beginning.

knowledge that he did not enquire ; but he allowed that it was something distinct from body ; and Toricelli admitted the same.¹ “ La forza et l’empeti sono astratti tanto sottili, sono quintessenze tanto spiritose, che in altre ampolle non si possono rachiudere, fuor che nell’ intima corpulenza dè solidi naturali.” If indeed we were even to grant the truth of Mr. Hume’s assertion, that no knowledge of Causation is derivable from experience (though this is contradicted by every man’s experience of his own thoughts), we might still maintain that it is a necessary Truth of Reason ; because it is impossible to *imagine* its falsehood without imagining a contradiction. Indeed I would be content to put the truth of this fundamental axiom—“That every new event must have a Cause,” upon this trial. Let any man of competent understanding attempt to *conceive* of an inanimate, inert body suddenly starting into motion, without a Cause ; or of an inanimate, moving body suddenly accelerating its own motion, without a Cause. If he can *imagine* such a thing as really taking place, I shall be surprised. I freely own it is an effort of imagination beyond my capacity.

Edwards, in his patient enquiry into the nature of the human will, has a chapter in which he tries to demonstrate a proposition of the same kind with that under consideration, viz., “that there is no event without a Cause.” If this required proof, and there were no other than Edwards brings, I might be dissatisfied ; especially as he seems almost to exclude

¹ Lezioni Accademiche.

Intelligence from being a Cause. But this truth is, as Edwards says, "the very first dictate of common sense." Every man throughout life, from the legislator to the peasant, acts from a conviction, That one thing results from and by another;¹ *i. e.* from an innate belief in the Doctrine of Causation; nor would it invalidate this fact to show, that it admitted of further analysis; or, that it is sometimes perverted so as to become the source of error. To destroy this belief would render science an impossibility, and life itself a most desperate game of chance. If, indeed, our original Postulate be admitted, Causation cannot be denied. Therefore, with the example of the Mathematicians before him, and an enlightened common sense to guide him, the metaphysical reasoner may take leave of the disciples of Hume, and lay down this fundamental Axiom, this Truth of pure Reason: that, **WHATEVER BEGINS TO BE MUST HAVE A CAUSE.**

The admission of this principle will lead us to the definition of which we are in search; which will be an answer to the question with which we commenced our enquiry—what is a Cause?

Allowing that it is reasonable, on the occurrence of any new event, to enquire—*why* has this taken place?—that is, what CAUSE was there for its beginning to be, when before it was not? a man, by *examining his own thoughts*, may decide on the nature of a Cause. This method of investigation, which I constantly pursue, will, I hope, effectually prevent the

¹ Even "Savages," says the Abbé Raynal, "wherever they see motion that they cannot explain, suppose a *soul*."

suspicion, that the definition, which will be here given, is an arbitrary one, framed for the sake of the conclusions to be drawn from it. As I would take pains to avoid such insincerity at the outset of a search after Truth, so I trust it may not be imputed to me at the close, by those who, from an unwillingness to receive my conclusions, may find it convenient to doubt the premises. A due caution in admitting principles I do not deprecate, but should we not exercise equal caution before we reject principles? And are we to imagine that men of plain, sound understanding, fairly arguing from right principles, will come to wrong conclusions?

If then, on the occurrence of some new event, we enquire for the "cause," I ask any man to consider what answer will satisfy him. Will it suffice to point out the instrument? or the occasion? or the reason of the event? Surely, it is "a dictate of our common sense," that no instrument can operate of itself: no *mere* instrument, of itself, makes any thing "begin to be." But, according to our axiom, p. 73, there must be a SOMETHING which makes it begin to be; and it is That which we are in search of. The question is, what is the *efficient* cause—which guides the instrument, uses the occasion, and entertains the reason of the event? The simplest idea of a Cause, therefore, is—THAT WHICH, OF ITSELF, MAKES ANY THING BEGIN TO BE.

This definition, which is substantially the same as that of Locke and our best writers, and which is deduced from the plain operation of our own minds, agrees with the common sense of mankind. Nor does

it, in any respect, differ from the old philosophical ἀρχή—an origin, a beginning, a genesis. I am now wholly unable to imagine two more perfect opposites than these two things; one which has such a nature that it can and does originate other things; and one which has such a nature that it cannot possibly originate anything. I suppose that the most sceptical will allow that these are two essentially different beings, as wholly distinct from each other as the ideas of entity and non-entity. Exactly in such opposition stand the ideas of “cause” and “instrument;” for the essence of the one consists in a power to originate, which, by its very nature, the other never has, nor can have. It follows, that the word Cause can never be applied to an instrument, except figuratively. I dwell not, in this place, on the inaccuracy of calling Occasions, and Reasons, the Causes of things.¹ I shall notice them however hereafter, and here only observe, that there seems a violent inconsistency in imputing to such abstractions (which have themselves no existence at all, except a fanciful one in our minds), the actual “power” of calling events and actions into being! But I here rather select the strongest possible case, that of an *evident* antecedent Instrument, which *contributes* to the event; and I affirm, that it has of itself no power, even in a figurative sense of the word, except in subservience to some real Cause—an Agent. I am afraid to seem prolix in insisting on so plain a point. If an Instrument could, of itself, originate, begin any thing, it would no longer be what we understand by the word instrument. It would cease to be a thing,

¹ See sect. 2.

and become a PERSON, endowed with POWER, MOTION, LIFE. So that our definition may now be simply expressed thus. A true Cause must necessarily have Life :—Life, not in the sense in which vegetables are said to live (which is only said by analogy¹); but Life which has in itself a Power, which can SPONTANEOUSLY be exerted on an object :—I say “spontaneously;” and I desire any one to think, whether, to abstract spontaneity from any Cause would not be to make it, so far forth, a mere Instrument? I therefore advance a step further, and affirm that the right and complete definition of a “Cause,” is A LIVING Being which has a POWER of SPONTANEOUS action; that is to say, AN INTELLIGENCE.² For, indeed, it seems to involve a plain contradiction, to say that a lifeless non-intelligent thing should be a “Cause,” a beginning, an originator, of that which has no previous existence.³ I again own that Instruments, Occasions, and other antecedents, are often *called*⁴ Causes; but they can be only figuratively called so, from their likeness to a real Cause in some external particulars (as, for instance, antecedence), which suggest the idea of similitude. Any thing more than this, I utterly deny them. Real Causes, true beginnings, they cannot be. I appeal to the honest judgment of any man, in so plain a matter.

If it be admitted, that there is no real Cause except an Intelligence, a question will next arise—whether,

¹ See Boyle's Disquisition on Final Causes, where this point is enlarged on.

² That is, something *above* mere Nature, viz. *Mind*.

³ Hence the absurdity of speaking of “matter *acting* on mind.”

⁴ See Whately's Logic, p. 175.

in all nature, there be but *ONE* real Cause, and all things besides, whether intelligent or not, be nothing but (instrumental and consequent) effects? Or, on the other hand, whether Intelligence is, of its own nature, causal?—that is to say, whether every intelligent Being, however finite, is, so far as his finite nature extends, a Cause, capable of originating action—physical, moral, and intellectual?

To put this latter question in its most practical form—Has not every man, within himself, an inscrutable life-spring, oftentimes self-acting, and self-controlled? Be it observed, that it would not in the least hinder our acquiescence in this conclusion, to show that every finite intelligence must adapt himself, and be subservient, to certain laws of nature—physical, moral, and intellectual. This is readily admitted. It is necessary, that, if an intelligence be *finite*, it be circumscribed and controlled by peculiar laws. The only question is, whether, owing to what I have termed an “inscrutable life-spring within him,” every Intelligence may not act, refrain from action, and renew action, in his own finite sphere? Whether a man, for instance, may not act from himself alone, without any other Intelligence necessarily being a Cause to him? I do not hesitate to believe, that he may and does; and I see not, why I may not, therefore, at once conclude that finite Intelligences are true Causes. A correct reasoner must decide in every case, according to the phenomena; and one of the most striking phenomena in the present case certainly is, That every man *believes* himself to be an originator—an agent. The educated and the un-

educated act alike on this conviction. Is our nature one universal lie?

It must be owned to be highly unreasonable to believe in the existence of what we do not perceive either by our senses or the light of reason. Therefore I would ask any man whether he does not often, and in fact hourly, think, and feel, and act, without perceiving that he is first acted upon by any other intelligent being? It will not of course be disputed that outward (or more properly *sensible*) things are occasions of thought and instruments of action; but, as we have seen, an Intelligence alone is a true Cause, and therefore I confine my question to that. Most persons will, I think, admit that they often act without any other Intelligence even partially suggesting the course they should pursue; much less wholly originating and controlling it. It may be said, that in the presence of every sensible occasion of thought or action, a finite Intelligence is often *obliged* to think and act in one certain way, and no other. But what more is implied in this than that which was before allowed—that a finite Intelligence must act in conformity with the fixed laws of nature? —That a finite Cause is not an infinite? But I would go so far as to own that if ever one Intelligence, or thinking being, or spirit, is conscious that another spirit is operating upon it, in an irresistible way (and I do not deny that this *may* be), that second spirit is the true Cause of whatever event ensues. When one Intelligence is made use of by another, it becomes, to a certain extent, a kind of instrument; but until men are fully *conscious* that they are thus the sub-

jects of restraint and control, they will assuredly be justified in believing that their actions are originated by themselves alone, and modified by themselves, according to the laws of nature, and only in obedience to them.

A notion very similar to this for which I have been contending, is advanced by Plato in the *Phædo*. It seemed to him that INTELLECT is the only "Cause," and of all other things in nature he asserts, without disguise, *αἰτία μιν τα τοιαῦτα καλεῖν λίαν ἄτοπον*. There is much to this purpose in many parts of that dialogue; (as well as in the *Timæus*). As, for instance, when he asserts the superiority of the governing mind over the bodily affections and desires. And, again, when he puts this question into the mouth of Socrates, 'what is the cause that I am sitting here?' He replies, that it would be absurd to say that it was the adjustment of his bodily limbs, or any other bodily thing, the real Cause being the judgment of the Athenians which condemned him, and the judgment of his own Intellect, that, when he had an opportunity to escape, it was better to obey the law. In about the same part of that dialogue, Plato declares himself highly delighted with the doctrine of Anaxagoras, that *Νεϛ* is the *ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως*, or, as he expresses it, (much to the bewildering of certain learned critics) "*ἀσμενος εἰρηκεναὶ ὦμην, διδασκαλον τῆς αἰτίας περὶ τῶν ὄντων κατὰ Νεν ἐμαυτῷ*;" but he finds fault with his master, for not adhering to this principle, and for falling off into the common error, of reckoning instruments and occasions, as the "causes of things."

I have thus far taken no distinct notice of the hypothesis, that there is in all nature but one real Cause, and that all finite Intelligences are mere Instruments. Indeed I have but little to say to so extravagant a theory, which is sufficiently disproved by what has been demonstrated concerning consciousness. The utmost that can be said *for* it is, that it is not a palpable impossibility; so that the obstinate may think it a fortunate and impregnable retreat; and if they insist on defending it, as Hartley and others have done, it cannot be helped. It is certain that they can bring no *proof* of it, for all the evidence seems to tell directly against it; and it is as certainly contradicted by the most enlightened common sense of mankind. I shall therefore content myself with stating, to such as entertain this belief, that, in the first place, it is subversive of all notions of merit and demerit, punishment and reward; in a word, of all morality; and this is, to me, a sufficient reason for rejecting it. In the second place; they who have the satisfaction of believing a theory, without a shadow of reason to support it, may rest quite secure in the certainty that their favourite hypothesis will never be *disproved*. And this may perhaps be a sufficient reason for their embracing it. But so long as it is deemed most unreasonable to hold an opinion, on any subject, contrary to *all* the phenomena, this ultra-visionary theory is not likely to delude mankind.

We may certainly admit, as I before hinted, that there are times when the Eternal Spirit—the Mighty God—directly influences, and even irresistibly con-

trols, the minds of men—but then they are *conscious* of it; and I equally maintain, that the general actions of mankind are self-originated; and of this too every man is conscious.

The conclusion at which we have now arrived, concerning the intelligent nature of all causes, will help us to decide on the well-known controversy concerning the *relation* of Cause and Effect. I suppose that no man will now doubt that there is, and must be, a necessary connexion between an intelligent originator and the thing originated—a thinker and a thought—an agent and an act. Could any one, who understands the meaning of words, say that it was the result of *accident*, that an intelligence originated an action? that is to say, that there was merely a “sequence of two events?”—So that it might have possibly happened that the relation between them should have been wholly reversed, and the action have been cause, and the intelligence effect? Such a proposition has absolutely no meaning at all. To suppose that an action could become a true “cause,” contradicts what has been before proved—That intelligence is the only Cause. To say that an active principle could be “originated” by that which is, by its very nature, passive, is a most vehement absurdity. Whatever can “begin to originate” ceases to be passive, and becomes an active principle—essential intellect, *Nsg.* A perception of the true nature of a cause enables us therefore, at once, to decide, That it has an efficient connexion with its effect.

But concerning what are erroneously called

“physical causes,” that is, the instruments and occasions of things (in other words the whole sensible world), I must undoubtedly agree with those who assert that there is no necessary efficient connexion between any two objects. To suppose, indeed, that there is anything more than the fact of Sequence, and, occasionally, the fact of Fitness, would overthrow all our former conclusions. It would make every sensible occasion, every law of nature, and every abstraction of mind, to be an efficient active principle, an Intelligent cause. It has ever appeared to me to be wholly impossible to allow any degree of innate efficiency to any such merely nominal cause, as a “Law of Nature,” without embracing the whole system of Pantheism. Nor can it be imagined that the denial of this efficiency introduces the least doubt or uncertainty into philosophy. The invariable present and future junction of Antecedents and Consequents (the former the subject of experience—the latter of belief in the Law of Causation) will give just as much certainty and stability to the Laws of Nature and our conclusions therefrom, as any supposed efficient powers in Nature itself; and indeed still greater, unless these supposed powers are omnipotent; because such invariable junction results, as we must admit, from an Intelligent Cause: and the believer in God will maintain that the invariable Sequence in Nature is the result of the firm ordination of Him who is the Intelligent and Mighty Cause of all.

Thus the whole question lies before us in very small compass—

Wherever there is Originating Efficiency there must be Life—Power—Spontaneous Motion—in a word, Intelligence. Therefore, to say that any “Laws” or Nominal “Powers of Nature” are Efficient, Self-originating, or Self-operating, is to deify Nature ; and such a system of Pantheism may suit Spinoza, but will not suit the Christian ; for whatever the Philosopher may say, it is practical Atheism. Yet, strange as it may seem, this Atheistic notion of the necessary connexion of natural things, is most extensively entertained in the world, and is often dexterously represented as the foundation of the argument for the existence of Deity !—while, on the contrary, it is so utterly destructive of every such argument, that the man who entertains it may be safely challenged to give a reason for his faith in God.

The amount of our conclusions thus far, founded on the “Truth of Reason”—‘That whatever begins to be has a Cause’—appears to be simply this :

Proposition I. Every Cause is an Intelligence.

And, conversely, every Intelligence is a Cause. Whence,

Proposition II. There is an Efficient necessary connexion between such True Causes and their Effects ; but not between any other two objects or events. Whence we deduce,

Proposition III. There is a Law of Invariable Sequence, (frequently manifesting fitness) among natural objects and

events (which must be the result of some Intelligence); so that from the Antecedence of one we may expect another, as its subsequent ; but not as its consequent.

These three Propositions are necessary, both to Theology as a Science, and to Religion as a Reality. They develope, in more explicit language, the General Doctrine of Causation, with which this Dissertation commenced, and are to be considered as DATA for our future arguments.

SECTION II.

OF MORAL CAUSES.

THERE is, I am fully aware, a too general impression that the Doctrine of Causation is inconsistent with the Free-agency of Man. Many respectable writers, who seem to have felt the force of the argument for this doctrine, have hesitated to receive it, on account of its apparent repugnance to Moral Freedom. Thus the very argument from Effect to Cause, on which they generally relied for their proof of the Being of God, seemed, when thoroughly carried out, to undermine all Morality and Religion. Before we enter, therefore, on the consideration of what are called "Final Causes" it seems necessary to consider the subject of Moral Causation. For, unless a right judgment be formed on this point, Theology, as a natural science, is the most barren of all speculations. We might, indeed, erect a gloomy altar to "an unknown God" but if we be not Moral Agents, we could not reverence, love, or rationally obey him. He would be to us a dark abstraction. The first link in the iron chain of the Universe! The obscure Theology of Nature is an object not worth pursuing, if Religion and Morality are impossible.

If the Doctrine of Causation had been always clearly understood in the manner which I have en-

deavoured to enforce, this controversy would probably never have arisen. The careless introduction and indefinite use of abstract terms have (as Bishop Berkeley long since observed)' brought much obscurity into Metaphysical Science; and certainly this doctrine of Causation has suffered greatly, as well as others. I cannot too earnestly exhort every one who would think accurately to be on his guard against these "abstract terms." It must be evident to all, how much that part of our subject, which has been already discussed, was mystified by these abstractions. Thus, to get rid of the Doctrine of Intelligent Causation, Mr. Hume introduces such Imaginary Phantoms as "Experience," and "Habit," and treats them as really existing things or persons; saying that "Custom operates on Imagination." In the same manner, this verbal trifling has infected the inquiry concerning Moral Causes. Such senseless abstractions as NECESSITY, FATE, and CHANCE, have had powerful champions, seeming to vie with each other in perplexing a plain subject. There will be occasion also to notice, as we advance, some other very innocent-looking abstractions which have had a considerable influence in deceiving the world. (See p. 90. &c.)

A clear conception of the Doctrine of Causation will enable us to meet the Sceptic on his own ground, and the Moralist on his. By Proposition I, We admit a Law of Efficient Causation, as strict as the

¹ See the Introduction to his "Principles of Human Knowledge" which contains, even in Mr. Hume's opinion, the greatest discovery of Modern Science.

most philosophic believer in "necessity" could demand—but we reject the unmeaning words "necessity" and "fate." We maintain the essential SPONTANEITY of a Cause, and, by Proposition II, its necessary (and not accidental) connexion with its effect; but we reject the term "Free Will," as an unintelligible abstraction. By Proposition III, we infallibly trace one event to another, till we arrive at an agent. Moreover we impute essential freedom to every Agent—every Cause—but Infinite Freedom only to the Infinite Agent, the Infinite Cause. We thus make the Law of Causation not merely consistent with, but the very basis of, all possible Morality—the sole foundation of Human Responsibility.

Aristotle has observed, in his chapter on Voluntary Action, that a man is blamed or praised for that of which the principle, or beginning, is "within himself," "*ἐν ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ*."¹ And such is the instinctive judgment, the ordinary feeling of mankind. Our common ideas of praise and blame seem to be founded in a true philosophy, and in the nature of things; for every intelligent being, as we have seen, is the spontaneous Cause of Action, and the only possible Cause:—and, also, there is an essential connection between the Cause and its Effect. The old problem—"Why all men believe themselves to be the free Agents, when their Actions must necessarily result from some Cause"—presents no difficulty whatever to us. On the contrary, the *latter*

¹ Ethics ad Nic. l. iii c. 1.

fact *accounts for* the former.¹ But we are not left to draw this fact of our free agency, as a mere inference from the Law of Causation. The evidence for this fact is as strong and immediate, as it is for that of Causation itself; it is, indeed, of precisely the same character.

It will be remembered that we laid down at first, that the ‘undeniable facts of our nature are a basis broad enough and strong enough for us to build thereon the science of our nature.’

If, therefore, any Sophist declares that there is no connection between a cause and its effect, but that “mere sequence” is all that can be predicated, I ask any man simply to look into his own thoughts, and decide, whether he does not feel and know, that there is often a real connection, totally distinct from the fact of sequence, between himself and his actions? I appeal to his “consciousness,” and I should not be afraid to risk the whole Doctrine of Causation on his answer. And, in exactly the same manner, I would ask any one to decide for himself, whether he does not feel as certain of the fact, that he is an Agent—(*that is*, Free)—as that he exists? Of both facts he is equally conscious.

This idea of “consciousness” is, I am aware,

¹ I object to the *phrase* free-will, and in so doing I only follow in the steps of Locke. (See Essay.) The phrase is absurd. When an Act of Will has come into being, it cannot be called free; and before it comes into being, it has, of course, no existence either as free, or not free. It seems as absurd to say *FREE-will*, as it would be to talk of *WHITE-black*, *NON-INCLINED inclination*—or any other incongruity or impossibility. The freedom is *in the Agent*.

often objected to. It is even represented as an appeal to the ignorance of mankind ; for, undoubtedly, the vulgar might declare that they were “conscious” and “certain intuitively,” of some things which science has disproved ; as, for instance, of the Sun’s moving round the Earth. To which I reply—That the “consciousness,” for which I contend, is such as the educated and the uneducated alike possess. If the most refined and enlightened specimen of all our Species could be brought before me, I would put the above questions to him, and wait confidently for his answer.

It may be truly said, then, that a man believes himself to be a “Free Agent” *BECAUSE he is so*. He knows that he is so, because it is declared by a voice within him ; he has an inward “Law” or “Light of Nature”—(which may be called by various names—as conscience, “consciousness,” or perhaps most properly—the **HIGHEST REASON**, as it directly perceives the “Truths of Reason”)—he cannot tell how he came by it ; but, throughout life, he trusts to it implicitly. No deductions of the Understanding¹ can possibly overthrow a “Truth of REASON,” whether it be a particular and relative, or a universal and absolute Truth. No chain of Syllogisms can lead to a Conclusion as certain as any fact of which a man is conscious. Thus, “It is barely possible,” says Lord Brougham,² “that Matter has no existence ; but that Mind—that the Sentient Principle the thing or being which we call ‘I’ and ‘We,’ and

¹ That is, as I remarked before —“The faculty which judges according to sense.”

Discourse of Natural Theology, p. 51.

which thinks, feels and reasons, should have no existence, is a contradiction in terms." And why? Because we feel it—we know it—we are "conscious" of it. We cannot go beyond this.

It would be fortunate for Philosophy if its professors would remember that their business is to discover the Ultimate Facts of Mind and Nature. Nothing is more unreasonable, than to demand proof of any such ultimate Facts. The attempt, for instance, to *prove* our own existence, must commence by an assumption of that Fact. For, every one who proves, *reasons*; and a reasoner is a *thinker* and a Thinker who has "no existence," is a plain "Contradiction in terms." The fact of Free-Agency may be decided in the same way as the Fact of Existence: every man will affirm it for himself: and, I repeat. that that knowledge of which *all* men (and not any particular men) declare themselves "conscious," is more certain than that which rests upon evidence, testimony, or proof, of any kind.

But so deeply rooted has the notion become, in many minds, that the fact of Free Agency is opposed to the fact of Causation, that they may only remain half persuaded of the Truth, after all that has been said, unless I take pains to expose, in detail, that perverted Ingenuity which has so long employed itself, in setting these facts at variance.

In one of the notes to the "Aids to Reflection,"¹ Coleridge has some remarks which prove, unless I greatly err, that he entertained, to a great extent, the doctrine of Causation as it has been laid down by us.

¹ See p. 257.

His subject led him more particularly to discourse of the Will of man, but I think that he would not have objected to the extension of the principle, there admitted, to the whole Mind. He observes, that “As we know what life is, by Being—so we know what Will is, by Acting”—which statement corresponds, exactly, with what has been asserted by us concerning “Consciousness.”

In further explaining what he means by “originating an Act,” he affirms that a “Finite Will constitutes a true beginning.” This sentiment, if fully followed out, would lead to the General Doctrine of Causation which has been here advanced. The same remarks which are applicable to Will, may be extended to MEMORY or any other of what are called powers or “faculties” of the Mind. This will appear more plainly, if we reflect that all such terms as Will, Memory, Judgment, &c., are mere abstractions; and every Abstraction, as we before observed, is a fiction of the Mind—an Imaginary Creation from facts. Thus; I think—*therefore*, it is said, I possess “thought.” I remember—*therefore*, it is said, I have “Memory.” I will, and judge—*therefore*, I am said to have a “Will” and “Judgment.” But it would be absurd to suppose that “Will,” “Judgment,” &c., are distinct parts of the Mind, as the hand and the foot are distinct parts of the body.¹ The sense which every man has that he is one Being—a UNITY—ought to be an effectual safeguard against the decep-

¹ But no one whose attention has not been drawn to the subject can be aware how greatly this supposition pervades, practically, almost *all* metaphysical writings.

tion which might arise from these abstract ideas. Yet it is a general, though erroneous, way of thinking and speaking,¹ to regard what are called the "Human Faculties," as distinct entities, which, taken altogether, make up one intelligent Being.

If there be any truth in these remarks—if it be true, that my "Will" is no more than a personification of a particular Action of my Mind; and that it has no more distinct Existence, than the Action of perceiving (which is called "Perception") or any other of my Actions; then it follows, that it is mere sophistry to treat this Personification—this abstract idea—as if it were a real Agent. Hence, to talk of the "Will" necessarily obeying the dictates of the judgment, is perhaps as absurd a piece of Logomachy as could be found in Metaphysics. It represents one abstraction as operating upon another abstraction! And even this imaginary representation is only got up, to obviate the necessity of some third abstraction! for, if it had not been to oppose "free-will," I doubt much whether we should ever have heard of "Will bowing to the dictates of Judgment!"

I would fain persuade every man to undertake the examination of one of these Abstract Ideas, for his own satisfaction; for they are the source of almost all sophisms in this branch of mental science. I ask any one to reflect whether this sentence, "I have a Memory," means any thing more than this, "I Remember?" For myself, I feel as truly conscious, that an act of Memory is really *my* act, as that any act can

¹ See, as an instance, J. Edwards's Definition of Will, &c.

possibly be mine. I feel that there is no more reason for believing my mind to be made up of distinct entities or attributes or faculties, than that my foot is made up of walking and running. My Mind, I firmly believe, thinks, and wills, and remembers, just as simply as my body walks, and runs, and rests : in what is called the "process of Memory," I observe that I call up my thoughts, and actions, and circumstances, long since past, and arrange and contemplate them. I can do this, and frequently, indeed, the more perfectly, when I close my eyes and shut out all sensible objects : and, on the other hand, I may frequently borrow assistance from some sensible object or occasion, between which and the subject of my thoughts there may be some natural (i. e. general) connexion, or some arbitrary one which I myself created. Now, what is most plain to me in this whole process is, that it is I MYSELF who do it all. In so doing, I am doubtless subservient to the laws of nature, which, when I have arrived at a certain limit, impede my acting. But this is only a necessary condition of my power and agency being finite, and is, of itself, sufficient to prove that I am, within certain limits a Free-Agent. A man who, in running, dashed his head against a wall, would not be apt to conclude, that *therefore* he had no power to run !

In a word, whatever fact, or argument, proves me to be an "Agent" at all, proves me to be Free ; for, the very phrase "*Free-Agency*" is a pleonasm.

As a final illustration of this subject, let some simple case be proposed. A stranger asks me to tell him the way to some place. I probably pause and

reflect, for it is not familiar to me. But by trying to remember, I at length succeed. It is impossible to analyse that simple operation of mind by which I do it. I remember both the place and the way to it. By a most mysterious power within me, I travel in thought, with lightning rapidity, through roads, streets and lanes. All are, as it were, present to my mind. But there are no sensible occasions to assist me, except the name of the place pronounced by the stranger; and that could only be an occasion of this mental process, so far as I determined it to be so; for I might have passed on without noticing it. It is, indeed, a *fact*, that I have been in the place before—and that fact is called “Experience”: but the fact that I can recall, *remember*, that experience, is still unexplained. It is, indeed, a *fact*, that I previously had been acquainted with the relative position of the streets leading to the place in question, and with the names assigned to them; and between them and some of my thoughts, there might be some sort of connexion:—so that, after remembering one thing, I proceeded to remember another; and this fact is called, “Suggestion”: but this does not explain *how* and *why* it is, that one thought is followed, or (as it is improperly said) “Suggested,” by another. It is, therefore, mere trifling to say, that “Experience” or a law of “Suggestion,”¹ are any explanation of the fact that “I remember.” They are themselves facts which require explaining: they are a part of the very phenomenon which we are exploring.

¹ According to Dr. Brown.

There is a simplicity in truth, and to my mind it seems best to agree with that simplicity, to attribute every mental process to the active nature of the one agent—Man ; and this will, indeed, seem but reasonable to any one who reflects on the nature of any agent ; for a Being endowed with power, would not be, in any rational sense of the word, “ an Agent,” if it could only act in one way ; it would be a kind of machine. Hence, I find it necessary to attribute a variety of mental processes to one agent.

But to resume ;—I have said, that in the case of the stranger asking of me the way to a certain place, I at length remembered the place and the way, distinctly. This supposes that I possessed that wonderful power, of recalling the facts in question, in full perfection. But this is only one supposition out of many which might be made. It might have happened that I only remembered a part of the facts, and a part of my past experiences. Yet, be it observed, that to the fullest extent of my possession of power, it is I MYSELF who operate. Again ;—Instead of costing me any effort, the act of remembering might have followed as immediately on the pronounciation of the name, as the reflection of an object in a mirror on the presence of that object. In every case, being a finite Agent, I can only act to the extent of my power, and according to the laws of my being. But, to proceed with our illustration :—Having originated and perfected, to the best of my ability, an Act of Memory, I have next to originate an Act of Will. And this, perhaps, is even more completely in my power than the former. If I can speak a language

intelligible to the stranger, I may inform him concerning the name of the place ; or I may not. Which-ever of the two actions I may decide on, the decision must be attributed to myself alone.

But it might be said, according to some philosophers,—‘You must have a MOTIVE for deciding in the one way or in the other ;’ and to that motive the decision must be attributed as its Cause. Of all the abstract ideas that have imposed on mankind this which is signified by the word “Motive,” has been the most mischievous.¹ This pestilent abstraction, which has found favor even with our best writers, is also the ready tool of every half-witted Sceptic who, in set phrases which occupy the place of ideas, controverts the plainest truths of common sense. Men are constantly said “to obey the strongest motive,” to be “governed by motives” — “influenced by motives,” &c. Now surely it would be well to know what sort of things these motives are ; and I suspect that whoever will take the pains to examine them will find them to be a shadowy set of impostors which pretend to take the place of Intelligent Causes. The motive of a man is, if I mistake not, that which *moves* him to act in a certain way : if it does not mean this, the word is most ambiguous, and liable to mislead. If it does not pretend to be the *Origin* of the Act, it is mere Sophistry to speak of it as the “Motive ;” but, since we have before established, by Proposition I, that an Intelligence is the only Cause of Action, there is a flagrant inconsistency in admit-

¹ It were invidious to refer to particular writers. I prefer, almost, to say—*vide* Metaphysical authors, *passim*.

ting that anything else, which may go by the false name of Motive, is, in any correct sense, a Cause. From this we argue, that sensible objects (facts, or circumstances, or intellectual or moral reasons) have no more right to be called Motives, or *Movers* of Action, than they have to be called "Causes." Yet as there must, of necessity, be a life-spring, a beginning of Action or Motion, somewhere, (according to our axiom) we think it more reasonable to impute it to the Living Agent, than to that which is non-intelligent—whether it belong to the class of Facts, or Reasons, or lifeless Abstractions. I think that the honest enquirer into truth and nature will find an absurdity in supposing, that intelligent beings are passive, and that the only active beings, or principles, in all nature, are non-intelligent and lifeless!—however much such a notion may suit others, who would build up a theory of their own, to disprove the very faculties which they exercise.

Whenever, therefore, any one shall say to us, 'You have a *Motive* for your conduct,' in any matter; we may reply, each for himself—'If, by *motive*, you mean, that which *moves* to an action, I am MYSELF *my own* MOTIVE—the cause of my own actions.'

Such is our whole conclusion, concerning Moral Causation. In arguing thus for Free-Agency, we have proceeded synthetically (*ἀπο τῶν ἀρχῶν*) from the principles of Causation, previously laid down in the three Propositions; as, at first, in arguing to those principles, we proceeded analytically, from the facts of Nature and Human Consciousness.—(See Postulate p. 46, and Axiom p. 73.)

SECTION III.

OF FINAL CAUSES ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENTS.

BEFORE we proceed to demonstrate the true doctrine of Final Causes, and other consequent truths, from our present data, it will be necessary to examine the doctrine of the ancients, on this subject ; as it is essentially different from the modern doctrine which bears the same name.

It has been remarked, by many, that there is something inconsistent, if not suicidal, in the phrase "Final Cause," and it must be acknowledged that there is, indeed, a *primâ facie* obliquity in it ; and I suppose that, after what has been thus far proved, few persons will think the expression a happy one. It may readily be admitted, that more appropriate phrases might be found (as for instance Final Reason—or Ultimate Intention—which more nearly express the idea) but I would not omit this opportunity of enforcing, that there is not *more* impropriety in the phrase "Final Cause," than in "Instrumental Cause," "Secondary Cause," and all such forms of speech. How much so ever custom sanctions them, and obliges us sometimes to use them, they are all erroneous.

The doctrine of the ancients, on this subject, deserves our attention, not simply for the sake of its importance to this discussion, but because it may

be considered as affording a fair sample of the scrutinizing character, and deeply thoughtful spirit, of that old philosophy, which some imagine to be nothing but a mass of exploded error.

The last of the four kinds of Causes before enumerated (p. 57)—(termed Final Causes) we have said to be synonymous with “The end or purpose which anything answers” (see p. 58.) Thus, if I state; That the crystalline humour of the eye of the fish is adapted to the dense medium through which rays of light pass to it—I state a fact, and, (according to the ancients) the “Final Cause” of it. The doctrine of the ancients was not an immediate *deduction* from the Law of Efficient Causation, as the modern doctrine is said to be. It was simply an abstract statement concerning certain facts of nature. They believed it to be man’s duty to conform to nature, and they therefore inquired into the facts of nature. But they were not in the habit of drawing any farther theoretical inferences. The moderns, on the contrary, build up a doctrine, wholly on inferences. The ancients argued *to* nature, and then they stopped. The moderns there take it up, and argue *from* nature to something beyond it.¹ Now it is evident from the fundamental propositions, established in Part I, that a “Final Cause” has, in reality, nothing causal in it. An inquiry into Final Causes, therefore, in the old philosophy had nothing in common² with

¹ See Part II of this Dissertation. Sect. I.

² Xenophon. Mem. I. 4. may by some be thought an exception to this statement; though the God, [or Gods,] for whom he argues, appears shortly afterwards to be a mere anima mundi!

the argument from Effect to Cause. It was an examination into the *Tendencies* of things, which might be gathered from the facts of adaptation and "fitness;"^(A)—(See Prop. III.)

As a plain instance, we may take that of Aristotle at the opening of the treatise on Politics. The mutual adaptation of the sexes to one another, is the first of a series of inductions, from which he argues 'that the *tendency* of man's nature is to society.' He observes that in all discussions it is necessary to begin "with an assumption of something" (see p. 112.) And Aristotle's assumption, on which all his speculations rest, is, "That Nature does nothing in vain." Assuming this, he proceeds to investigate the *reasons* of certain dispositions observable in nature; and this investigation is, with him, a process of strict analysis. And if his assumption be fair (which few will deny) his reasoning from it is perfectly just; for if there be a reason why every thing is *as* it is and in no other way, an examination of things may be one

^(A) Which facts, of course, even Epicurus admitted; he only denied the *Inference* from them. His argument was, That before the existence of the eye, for instance, it could not be known what *sight* was;—therefore it could not be said that the eye was made *for* seeing. All sight, and consequently all knowledge of sight, must be subsequent to the eye. Which argument can only be overthrown by showing, on other, and quite independent, grounds, that there existed previously a Being of infinite knowledge and skill. It is clearly a very different thing to say—Certain things are well adapted to certain uses; and to say—Certain things were "*created for*" certain uses. This latter sentence implies a Creator and a Designer, who must *first* be acknowledged.—See the second part of this Dissert. § I. Those who dispute the law of Causation, and the Christian Revelation, are bound to agree with Epicurus.

means of discovering that reason ; which will be the “ Final Cause.”

To this subject Plato refers, in a passage before alluded to,¹ where he not only complains of Anaxagoras for failing to inquire into FIRST Causes but also into FINAL Causes—not merely the *origin*, but the REASON and NECESSITY of things. He says that he expected his new master ² “ ἐπεκδιηγησεσθαι τὴν Αἰτίαν, καὶ τὴν Ἀναγκὴν, λεγόντα τὸ Ἄμεινον. καὶ ὅτι αὐτὴν [Γῆν] ἄμεινον ἦν τοιαύτην εἶναι· καὶ εἰ ἐν μεσῷ φαίη εἶναι αὐτὴν, ἐπεκδιηγησεσθαι ὡς Ἄμεινον ἦν αὐτὴν ἐν μεσῷ εἶναι· καὶ εἰ μοι ταῦτα ἀποφαινοίτο, παρσκευασμὴν ὡς ἔκετι ποθεσόμενος αἰτίας ἄλλο εἶδος.

We can only hope to arrive at this “ Reason of things ” in a very partial degree, and that only by a patient induction of particulars. By the light of nature, we can never gain such a knowledge of it as shall be of use in Theology. Thus we find, that the strict doctrine of Final Causes among the Ancients was, at the best, only a Moral, and never a Theological Doctrine.³ Nevertheless we may perceive some slight shades of difference between the Doctrine of Final Causes to be gathered from some scattered pages in the writings of Plato, and that of his illus-

¹ Phædo, p. 206 Ed. Lond. 1825.

² According to Aristotle, Anaxagoras seemed to agree with Epicurus in this matter, and rejected Final Causes. (See Creech’s Lucretius, p. 378). This opinion is attacked by Lactantius “ De Opificio Dei.” c. 6.

³ Sumner’s Records of Creation V. I. p. 249 quotes the only passage, I think, contrary to this;—and even this is hardly decisive.—See Note p. 99.

trious scholar. The metaphysical system of Aristotle exercised a considerable influence even on his *Ethics*. The same principle, perhaps, which taught him to disregard the inquiries of Plato concerning the Supreme Good, directed his moral researches into a practical channel. He cared little about examining the Metaphysical *δύοι*; the Practical *ἑν* was his chief care. The chapter, which we before alluded to, on "Voluntary Action" may be pointed out as a specimen of his common-sense way of treating Metaphysical subjects.

It is possible that there may be a Final Cause of (or a wise purpose to be answered by) every particular thing, or character of a thing, in Nature. Thus for instance, the Final Cause of "fear," in any animal, may be self-preservation; of which species of Final Causes Lord Kames has largely treated, in his "Elements of Criticism." But the discovery of General (or perhaps Universal) Final Causes, will alone lead to any important result.

Perhaps there is not extant, a general inquiry into Final Causes so perfect, in all respects, as the *Ethics to Nicomachus*;¹ and I mention it, in order more fully to illustrate the *nature* of such an Inquiry. With the most admirable skill and judgment, Aristotle passes by all subtle distinctions and controversies:—he has to do with *facts*; he is selecting the Phenomena. His masterly system of Morality stands on the simple, yet ample, base of those facts

¹ The *Ethics to Eudemus*, and the *Magna Moralia* seem little more than the outlines of this Treatise. The latter of these is not, I believe, now considered to be Aristotle's.

of Human Life and Conduct, with which Experience had furnished him. These he regarded as sufficient data: he could not believe with the Fatalist, that Nature was a mass of Deception, from first to last.

He sets out, in this Treatise, by remarking that every art and system among men seems to have some *aim* and tendency. He does not attempt to *prove* this; he supposes that no one will dispute that, "it seems"—it *appears*, to be so,—*δοκεῖ*. He states it as a *phenomenon*: it is not his business to account for it. He concludes, that a fact so universal, has a foundation in nature and truth. Man is but a part of a Mighty whole; if the parts severally answer a purpose—tend to some end—so, if we could discover the appetency, the main *tendency* of the whole, we should have a clear apprehension of the chief good, i. e. (to use a kind of pleonasm)—the ultimate end, *ἡ πάντα ἰσχύεται*. The ability with which this idea is worked out, is no less remarkable than the idea itself. From a nominal definition of this chief end of Man—"Happiness"—he advances to a real and critical one—which he compares with the opinions of Philosophers and of the common world. His next step is, to see whether the Phenomena of human life—and human morals, are in harmony with his definition. By the most perfect chain of moral induction that the history of the world has produced—by the most skilful and practical examination of human conduct, in its intricate minutiae, (betraying a deep knowledge of the human heart and unparalleled powers of analysis), Aristotle deduced a Code of Morals, in perfect

harmony with that General Intention, Appetency, or *Tendency* of Nature, which he pronounced to be the Law of Morality to Man.¹

His Metaphysical System seems to have led him to consider Man in his social rather than his individual character; hence he treats Ethics as a branch of Political Science. This has been sometimes, but I think erroneously, considered as in opposition to the Christian System; which, it is said, treats with man in his individual character. But, it may be remembered, that Christianity also expressly declares, that we are “many members in one *body* ;” and more of “false doctrine, heresy and schism” have resulted from the individualizing of Christianity, in these times, (making individuals every thing and the Church nothing) than is ordinarily imagined. I do not, therefore, see the least opposition between Aristotle and the Christian System, in this particular; and how singularly his whole moral conclusions coincide with the pure code of Christianity, has been the remark and astonishment of all his readers. The difference lies in this; Aristotle did not recognize, as Christians do, a Moral Governor of the World. Critics have taxed their ingenuity, to the utmost, to find passages which, by some forced construction, or by their uncertain character, may uphold a contrary opinion:—but it is all in vain. Throughout his long and elaborate Treatises on Morals, I can find not one plain acknowledgment of a Moral Governor. And, indeed, the nature of his argument (which was *to* Final Causes, and not *from* them)—does not require it;

¹ See note C.

and if Mr. Boyle had considered this, he would not, I think, so unfairly have charged him with “ shifting off this whole Question.”¹

A “ Final Cause” of any thing, that is to say, the Intention of it, must, indeed, be considered *by us*, as an Effect resulting from an intelligent Cause; (in consequence of the doctrine which we have laid down); for since it belongs not to the Class of Intelligent Beings, or “ Causes,” it must belong to the Class of the Non-Intelligent, or “ Effects.” But this formed no part of the Speculation of the Ancients on the Subject. They treated of a Final Cause as a *positive* and not as a *relative* Fact.

The modern writer who has most successfully adopted the manner of Aristotle, and applied his doctrine of Final Causes, is Bishop Butler. To select from the writings of such an author as Butler, would be an arduous task. I cannot, therefore, do better than take, as a specimen, the first Sermon.² It is, as an Argument *to* Final Causes, perfect; nor can it indeed be expressed in fewer or better words than his own. His proposition is this:—

“ From a review and comparison of the nature of man, as respecting self and as respecting society, it will plainly appear, that there are as real and the same kind of, indications in Human Nature, that we were made for Society, and to do good to our fellow Creatures; as that we were intended to take care of

¹ See Boyle’s Disquisition.

² Butler’s Sermons are, perhaps, the best foundation for a system of Moral Philosophy in our language, and are used as such in one University, Oxford.

our own life and health and private good ; and that the same objections lie against one of these assertions as against the other."

This statement is founded on the pure ancient doctrine of Final Causes. He endeavours to substantiate it, in the plainest manner. He enumerates the *facts* of the case ; (in the language of Aristotle "*τιθεις τα φαινόμενα*")—and, from the principle of Benevolence in man—from his Reflective Power, Reason, and Conscience—he, at length, draws his powerful conclusions ; first, of the *tendency* of Man's Nature ; and secondly, of the obvious *duty* founded thereon.—It would, I think, be a strangely constructed mind which would not be convinced by him.

To conclude, summarily—The ancient doctrine of Final Causes was founded, as we have seen, on a simple inquiry into the Ultimate tendencies of things. The whole process was an examination of facts, and a statement of the result. It was, in the strictest sense of the words, a scientific doctrine. It admitted of proof, in the same manner as any Physical truths admit of it—A ball on an inclined plane has a *tendency* to roll down.—Man, in every gradation of savage or civilized life, has a *tendency* to Society.—The facts are before our eyes ; we cannot dispute them.

The modern doctrine of Final Causes, which we shall next proceed to examine at greater length, is of a very different character. Instead of being an argument of an inductive kind, it is wholly hypothetical. This is evident, for instance, from the circumstance that, on the one hand, the modern "Argument

from Final Causes," to establish the Being of God, *does not convince every one*; while on the other, the ancient "Argument to Final Causes" discovered the plain tendency of Nature, and convinced all. The Modern Argument being built on the hypothesis—That from the adaptations and tendencies of things, we may argue to their First Great Cause—may be disputed by every sceptic; and may, as an argument, be unsatisfactory even to the believer. While the ancient argument, being a process of pure Induction, cannot be disputed without denying the facts. The former is intended to conduct us to the BEGINNING—the latter, to the END of things.

PART II.

OF THE ARGUMENTS FROM CAUSATION.

“That a love of Truth for its own sake, and merely as Truth, is possible, my soul bears witness to itself in its inmost recesses.”

COLERIDGE.

SECTION I.

OF THE THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FROM

“FINAL CAUSES.”

I WOULD direct especial attention to the subject on which we are now entering. The science of finding fault is, perhaps, of all sciences the easiest to learn, and the most suited to the spirit and education of our times ; yet if a man be thoroughly persuaded of the existence and prevalence of an error, I cannot but think it his duty to incur the odium of finding fault with it, however popular it may be. As, however, nothing might be more easily misrepresented, and misunderstood, than the drift of our present argument, I will endeavour, by one or two explanatory remarks, to make an explicit preface, before I immediately proceed to the object before me.

I have already, to a certain extent, defined the modern doctrine of Final Causes, by distinguishing it from the ancient. The old Philosophy argued *to* Final Causes—the modern *from* them to something beyond them. So that the modern Argument appears to be (what the ancient was not) an Inference from an Effect to a Cause. As we are bound, therefore, by Proposition II. to allow the validity of every sound argument from Effect to Cause, the only question is—whether this be a sound one ?

I suppose that I cannot refer to a more unexceptionable authority than Dr. Paley, for a statement of that, which is assumed to be a correct *à posteriori* argument—That from the wonder-works of Nature we may, by natural reasoning, arrive at the conclusion, that God is the Author of all. In the second chapter of his Natural Theology, confessedly a popular treatise, Paley thus writes:—"There cannot be design without a designer—contrivance without a contriver—order without choice, &c." At the end of the 25th chapter he adds—"That designer must have been a person—That person God."

This is the Argument from Final Causes ; or, as it is not unfrequently called, "Paley's argument from Design." As to the Conclusion of this Argument, no Christian can have a moment's doubt. I affirm, however, if it be needful, in the distinctest manner, my belief, that there is design in Nature, and that God is the Author of it. The question with me is—Could this conclusion have been arrived at by the natural faculties of man ? Is there such a force, in what are called the "Evidences of Design," as to compel a fair

reasoner to acquiesce in the being of a God on Natural Principles? I firmly believe, and shall endeavour to prove, that there is not.

In weighing the value of any argument, we have nothing to do with the truth of the Conclusion. It is certain, that very bad arguments might be employed, in defence of the most evident Truth. Those who are greedy of conviction may accept of any thing in the shape of proof; and so, likewise, may those who habitually receive (if I may be pardoned for so applying the phrase) the “dictum de omni et nullo” of their teachers. But the correct Reasoner will consider, whether the conclusion may really be inferred from the premises? Nor will he forget, that there are some Truths, which can be inferred from no premises at all; but must, being Truths of the highest Intellect, be known by Intuition, or by Revelation. Of which I shall discourse hereafter.

We have said that the “Argument from Design” professes to be a legitimate *à posteriori* argument, from Effect to Cause; and that the chief question is, Whether, as such, it be a sound one? To place which matter in the clearest light, I shall point out the difference between sound and unsound arguments.

It was observed by Hume, that since the words Effect and Cause are “relative” terms, it is impossible to argue from one to the other, without being guilty of *petitio principii*—a “begging the question.” For, as he well says, if we begin by assuming that any thing is, in the strict sense of the word, an *Effect*, it follows, as matter of course, that it had a Cause. From which it might at first sight appear,

that this fault must not only be attributed to the Argument from Design ; but to every argument from Effect to Cause. But an attentive observation will convince us, that in this, as in other remarks of Hume, there is a mixture of truth and falsehood.

It behoves us to remember, that the premises of every correct argument must, in a certain sense, *assume* the whole of the conclusion at least ; and not unfrequently something more. A very little reflection will convince any one of this. For it is, as it were, the very first law of reasoning, that in our conclusions we must not state one iota more than was admitted in the premises. Thus ; we could not convict a reasoner of a grosser fallacy, than that of stating something in his conclusion, which was not either expressed or implied in the premises. Are we then to conclude, that all argument is impossible, or absurd ?—and that in every case in which we reason, we are, in consequence of the “ assumption ” necessarily made, guilty of a plain sophism, and “ beg the whole question ? ”

This might, perhaps, fairly follow on Mr. Hume's principles ; but a little consideration will extricate us from the apparent dilemma.

It is evident, that some things are more clearly known to us than others ; and, in the same manner, some modes of things are more intelligible than others. Now, Argument is an explanation of that which is doubtful, by that which is known. Whoever will examine any correct argument, on any subject, by reducing it into its syllogistic form ; (and every argument may be so reduced) or, by whatever other

means he may find most easy to himself, will infallibly discover, either first, That the premises are nothing but a simpler and commoner statement, of the Truth announced in the conclusion ; or 2ndly, That they are a mere analytical statement of it ; or 3dly, That they are a synthetical, (or, more properly perhaps, a Generalized) statement ; from which, of course, a particular Truth may be inferred as the Conclusion. This assertion, concerning the nature of all arguments, I thus leave, without thinking it necessary to bring proof of what every one may easily discover for himself. This sentence, then, is a synopsis of practical Logic. The premises of an Argument must contain the Conclusion fairly, and by implication ; but not formally :—hence, we cannot argue from particulars to universals, nor from negatives to affirmatives.

But every one's experience has convinced him, that premises may be *unfairly* assumed. Now, a FAIR ASSUMPTION must be of such a kind as an opponent cannot refuse to allow. If any Truth be of an intricate nature—if it be not indeed self-evident or previously established—a strict opponent may refuse to allow it. Whoever, therefore, in order to justify his conclusion, makes such an assumption, in his premises, as his opponent may fairly refuse to allow, (on the ground, that it is neither self-evident, nor admitted as proved,) is guilty of the fallacy of “ begging the question,” or *Petitio Principii*.¹ Hence, then, I would state this plain Corollary ; That

¹ See the application of these remarks, to Clarke's à priori Demonstration of the Being of God.

it is not lawful, in proving any proposition containing a relative term, gratuitously to assume the correlative in the premises.¹

Now, the words Cause and Effect are evidently relative terms. In arguing to a Cause, therefore, it is not lawful to assume the correlative "effect," *as such*; (that would be a *petitio principii*). We must assume only what is self-evident, or previously established. From all which, any one may see, how necessary it was to go into the investigation of the Nature of a Cause and an Effect, and of first principles in general, in the manner and to the extent which occupied the first part of this Dissertation. Therefore, let that part of our argument be now borne in mind (see p. 73), in which we established that—"Whatever begins to be must have a Cause;" as I am not arguing here with those who would dispute that

¹ A simple instance (and the simpler the better) will illustrate this:—The words "Father and Son" are relative terms: the one implies the other. There never, strictly speaking, was a Father who never had a Son, and vice versa. Let us now suppose some one to dispute, whether Julius Cæsar ever had a Father? With such an one it would be vain to argue, that he was the Son of *somebody*; and every Son implies a Father; and *therefore* he had a Father: for, if it were denied that he had a Father, of course it would also be denied that he was a Son. They are *relative* terms. If the one of two relative terms be not self-evident or admitted, the other cannot be. The utmost that I could expect such a sceptic to admit, would be, that (according to the course of Nature) every *Man* has had a Father; if he disputes this, I cannot argue with him. If he allows it, I have only to bring evidence, that Julius Cæsar was a *Man* (and not a Demigod or Beast,) and then, I infer that, He had a Father.

axiom. In the next place, let us see the application of our principles, to the first argument of Theology, viz., that for the Being of a God.

At every returning Spring-time we see the young buds and leaves of the garden and the forest burst forth, and “begin to be.” They are not the old leaves revived—though, if they were, our argument would not be less strong. In this case the argument for a Cause may be thus stated (and let it be constantly remembered that by the word Cause is meant an Intelligence):—

“Whatever begins to be¹ has a Cause.”

Certain objects in Nature “begin to be;”

Therefore—They have a Cause.

Now, this Argument (though of but little use to the Natural Theologian)—yet, to the full extent to which it goes, is a fair and unanswerable *à posteriori* Argument: there is no *petitio principii*. There is an assumption, indeed; and there must be one in every correct argument. But the first premiss is an assumption previously established; and the second is an assumption of what is a self-evident fact, which every man’s eyes may convince him of.

But let us now see the *nature* of the assumption in the celebrated “Argument from Design;” as that will decide, whether it is a fair inference from Effect to Cause.

The sentences of Paley, before quoted, contain the

¹ “Begin to be”—not necessarily in the *strict* sense, of *Creation* from Nothing—but, of *altering* what exists: just as the accelerated motion is said to “begin to be.” See p. 71.

substance of his whole volume : “ There cannot be Design without a Designer ” — “ That Designer is God. ” Now, I must beg, that this may be examined, simply, *as an argument*. I repeat, that I am as sure as any one can be, of the Truth of the Assertions, that there is Design in Nature ; and that God is the Author of it. But I dispute the validity of this *Argument*.

It requires but little attention to perceive, that the words Design and Designer are “ relative terms, ” and must we not, therefore, at once suspect Paley’s Argument to be a mere *assumption* — a bare-faced *petitio principii* ? To state that “ Design implies a Designer, ” is a manifest truism. Who ever doubted it ? But can the Natural Theologian, on Natural grounds, certainly *prove* that there is Design ? We may safely defy him to the trial. Let him look abroad into nature ; he will find thousands of facts which demonstrate undeniably the mutual “ adaptation ” and “ fitness ” of various things to one another : but few persons will be apt to allow, that “ adaptation ” and “ design ” are synonymous words. No man, I suppose, requires it to be proved elaborately, that he may find many things very well *adapted* to himself, or any other object, which were not *designed* for him or it.

In the case of a very exquisite degree of adaptation, design becomes *probable* ; and I do not in this place use that word technically, or philosophically, but in its ordinary sense ; but even then, the degree of its probability may be fairly open to dispute ; and there may be such counter-probabilities to balance against it, as may wholly destroy the force of the

original presumption. If, then, Design has not been certainly proved, it is an unfair presumption; and if it be called self-evident, then there is no *argument* in the case; for Design and Designer are relative terms. To argue from one to the other is as absurd, as if from imagining a Circle, a man should argue the *possibility* of a Centre or a Circumference! Of two relative terms, the one can never be made a position from which to proceed to the other.

No one, who at all reflects on the meaning of the words, will long dispute the assertion, that an Argument from Design can, at the best, only furnish a probable conclusion; therefore, it is not a fair argument from the Law of Causation laid down in Proposition I. and II. Even the probability of any such conclusion will vary, in exact ratio, with the positive knowledge which the Arguer has of the Designer; and his capacity for comprehending his character. It is not difficult to see, in what predicament this consideration places our Natural Theologians!

The advocates of "Design" seem to have been fully aware, that a probable Conclusion was all that they could draw. Hence, with a very natural eagerness, they heap up fact upon fact, thinking thereby to increase the force of their premises, and consequently augment the probability of their Conclusions. Whereas, they could not but be aware, that one really substantiated fact of design would be as good as ten thousand; because perfectly irrefutable. If any such valuable fact be found—Why is it not forth-coming? This constant appeal to facts of fitness, can, of itself, prove nothing *certainly*. To one who believes in

God, on *other* grounds, these facts are invaluable. The Christian rejoices in believing, that these facts of fitness, or adaptation, all result from the design of his Gracious God; the Natural Theologian has first to *prove* his God. He may then admit design in Nature; but not till then.

The circumstance, therefore, that Natural Theologians are ever zealously hunting through Nature, and exploring every recess and corner, for facts to substantiate their conclusion, is perfectly intelligible, when we remember, that the only facts, yet adduced, are facts of fitness; and the greater the accumulation of *such* facts, the stronger, of course, becomes the probability of Design. Of which probability, however, we must ever, naturally, remain but very inadequate judges. Indeed, I go so far as to believe, that it is almost an impossibility in the nature of things, that Design should ever be certainly known (however acutely it may be guessed at) unless the Designer himself revealed it. An "Argument from design" depends upon an *à priori* assumption of a knowledge of the character and mind of the Designer. Every one must have seen what ridiculous mistakes have ensued, even among men, by some people sagaciously imputing *design* to others, when nothing of the sort was thought of. If then, in human affairs, the "Argument from Design" would lead to an erroneous conclusion, unless the Arguer and the Designer have considerable mutual knowledge and intercourse, I need hardly attempt to shew how greatly the uncertainty or error, in such an argument, would be increased, when the Almighty Designer of this mag-

nificent Creation is the object of our reverent search ! It is an effort on the part of a " creature of a day," to trace out the Designs of the Eternal !—to comprehend the plans of the Incomprehensible !

The very utmost that can be allowed, even in respect¹ to human designs, is this—It is *possible*, and in some cases perhaps probable, that a very judicious observer, who has experience and knowledge to assist him, may, from external indications, rightly *guess* the internal design of an Agent ; especially if he move not in a sphere of life very remote from that Agent. But, even in this case, there would be no *certain* knowledge ; and numberless instances, of

¹ But, it may be said,—Although, in any supposed human case, the design might be mistaken, yet we might be right in saying that there was *some* Design ; and, if so, some Designer ; and this is all that is required, as the first step in the Theological Argument. To which I would reply ; we might, indeed, be right, but we might also be wrong. For it may, and frequently does, happen, that Design is imputed where no Design whatever existed. He is a fortunate man whose own experience will not furnish him with many such instances ! The Case might, I imagine, be found, of a man who has been a severe sufferer, and is surprised, at length, to discover, that it is all owing to the metaphysical acuteness of his friends, in tracing out Designs from appearances, and then casting those Designs on him ; making him, as it were, the scape goat to bear away the sins of their inductive logic !

It might seem superfluous to remind any one of the infinite distance between God and man ; in comparison of which, men are all on one level. Let those, however, who think by natural power to penetrate the arcana of God's Designs, consider the foolish conclusions of men even concerning *men* ! Query—What would the Smuggler think of the *Design* of the Statesman in bidding contraband goods to be seized ? What does the poor Manufacturer think of the Legislator's *Design* in taxation ?

course, could be adduced to show that he would often arrive at false conclusions.

It seems, indeed, a very plain matter, which requires no great depth of reflection to ascertain. I would ask, whether it be not true, that, in the strictest sense of the words, Thought can only exist in a Thinking Being? It must exist *somewhere*, if it exist at all; and I am at a loss to conceive of its existing in an *Unthinking* Being. Now a thinking being is a subject, and consequently thought may be said to have a subjective existence only. And the same is true of every thing, which exists in a Mind. If a Thought be embodied in words, written or oral, it has an objective existence, *i. e.* it becomes a Sentence. But a Sentence is not, strictly speaking, a Thought; but only the occasion of Thought, to Thinking Beings. In like manner, Design is only so far forth Design, as it exists in a Designing Mind. The word Design is a mere abstract term; the thing itself can no more exist out of a Designing Mind, than a Thought can exist without some one to think it. Design has only a subjective existence, and therefore can only become the *object* of human knowledge, when the Designer himself reveals it, and so makes it objective.

Now if Design must necessarily exist in a Mind, a fair and adequate judge of an Argument from Design must be a Being who can read Minds. "He who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the Children of men" is the only adequate Judge of human Designs;—who then shall be a judge of HIS?

I should here take leave of this fallacious argu-

ment; but it may be observed, that thus far I have dwelt on *one* part only of the statement made by Paley, viz., that which speaks of "Design." He continues thus;—"There cannot be contrivance without a contriver—order without choice," &c.

I would observe, then, that the remarks which have been made on the word Design, are equally applicable to this—"Contrivance;" for Contrivance and Contriver are "relative terms." I shall not, therefore, enlarge on this expression; but rather point out how Paley's argument breaks under him, directly he adopts an expression not strictly "relative." His reasoning being a verbal sophism, he could not, for a single line, leave the technical ambiguities in which he had intrenched himself. No one will call "order and choice" relative terms; and no one, who ponders the meaning of this sentence, will, I think, implicitly yield assent to it. "There cannot be order without choice!" How so?¹ Is this self evident?

I will not point to the order of basaltic pillars (seeming at times to rival that of human architecture) or to any other fact of physical nature. I prefer to bring this, as well as every other matter, to every

¹ Is it undeniable? There is not one word offered in *proof* of it. The learned Archdeacon seemed quite satisfied with "the fact," and did not even pause to affirm it twice; but left it in its unproved simplicity to astonish or convince the credulous. It would interfere with a large mass of popular Metaphysics, and Theology, if a book of "Assumptions" were published, consisting of compilations, from our popular authors, of affected reasonings, founded on that fashionable and flowery figure of speech, called "*Petitio principii*."

man's individual knowledge and experience ; and I ask—Whether the “order” of a man's actions, is *always* the result of “choice” ?—No ;—The truth seems to be, that this proposition has been linked to two or three evident Truisms, and has passed as one itself !

In conclusion,—It is worthy of remark, and ought, I think, to throw some suspicion on the whole Argument of Paley, that the Infidel Deist, as I before pointed out, defends it with as much zeal as any Philosophising Believer. Whether it be by accident or design I will not pretend to say, yet the very illustration which Lord Brougham, in his Discourse, (p. 43) calls “Dr. Paley's Example,” was the favourite illustration of Voltaire, half a century before. “Je serai toujours persuadé qu'une horloge prouve un horloger, et que l'univers prouve un Dieu.”¹ Paley makes a great deal of this idea, and extends it through several pages ; as both parties, therefore, seem to perceive so much strength in it, I shall examine it fully ; for I am anxious to make it as plain as truth can be made, that the whole “Argument from Design” is a fallacy.

It is supposed, that in passing over a heath a man might strike his foot against a watch, and, though he had never seen one before, might, from an examination of its various and nicely adjusted machinery, conclude, that “its parts are framed and put together for a purpose, *e. g.*, that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day ;” &c.

¹ Reponse à M. Mart : Kahle. et al.

In this case says Paley, "The inference is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker ; that there must have existed, at some time and at some place or other, an artificer, or *artificers*, who formed it for the purpose, which we find it actually to answer, who comprehended its construction, and designed its use." This case is contrasted triumphantly with the accidental notice of a stone, which, it is *presumed*, would exhibit no fitness of parts, or adaptation to an end. It is not my intention to dwell on this assumption, further than to remark, that it might on analysis appear, that the parts of the stone had a mutual fitness, as well as those of the watch. A minute investigation might make it appear, that the proportions in which the parts of that stone combined, followed a numerical law of exquisite simplicity, and incalculable extent ; perhaps even pervading universal nature : and if the ultimate end, to which that particular stone was adapted, were not so *evident* as in the instance of the watch, yet if the one afforded a probable argument for Design, so might the other ; and the probability would, at the best, only vary in degree. But I am of opinion that, neither the one nor the other, taken alone, would afford sufficient data for any such argument ; and, as the watch is considered the stronger case of the two, I shall keep to that.

It is true enough, that *we* can perceive Evidences of Design in a watch. We have a great deal of knowledge, which enables us to perceive those Evidences ; but it is perfectly groundless to suppose, that they would be perceived by a man

who had not our knowledge, to a very considerable extent.

Let it be noted, that the man who (according to Paley) finds the watch, does not draw one simple conclusion, but two ; and the distinguishing of these two will be of the greatest importance.

From examining the structure and action of this mysterious thing, he concludes, first, That it points out the hours of the day ; and secondly, That such an adaptation of the watch to the day, is a highly *probable* argument for an intelligent watchmaker.

This second conclusion depends wholly on the first. What, then, does the first depend on ?—It must evidently depend on the man's previous knowledge of the natural disposition of day and night, and of the artificial division of time, into hours and minutes. This latter requisite involves the necessity of, I had almost said, a species of moral qualification. For, if the supposed watch had been found by a savage, he might have thought the small round ticking thing, with twelve unmeaning signs, to be a personal ornament, or even a musical instrument ; but by no means can I suppose him to have thought of its being a time-reckoner. Our watch-finder, therefore, must be a person whose civilized notions of the "value of time" have suggested other artificial notions of "measuring" and computing time. In other words, he has acquired the habit of dealing with a most abstract idea, as if it were a reality. Now none but a man possessing such previous knowledge and habits, could draw, either the first conclusion, of general adaptation to a purpose ; or

the second, of a designing mind. Observe : The elasticity of a spring, the structure of a cogged wheel, the linking of a flexible chain, would not afford any argument for an intelligent watchmaker. These are, severally, the work of inferior agencies. But the mutual adaptation of wheels, spring, and chain, to produce an intelligible result, which harmonizes with a conventional distribution of time,—this indeed affords the highest *probable* evidence (to one who was *acquainted* with that artificial system of hours, minutes, and seconds,) that there was a watchmaker who was likewise acquainted with that system, and had adapted the watch to it.

It seems, then, that a man who knew nothing of our division of time, and had never seen a watch before, would not, from merely examining it, see the Design of it, nor argue to a Designer, as Dr. Paley did.¹ He could not draw the first conclusion; and, by consequence, would fail of the second. And, if we turn next to the Theological Argument, we shall find that we are exactly in the condition of such a man.

¹ The African Missionary Traveller, Campbell, tells an anecdote that fully corroborates this. When he shewed his watch to a group of savages, they started back with horror, thinking it, at first, from its sound and motion, a living and almost supernatural thing. It must be hoped, that some future Edition of Paley will have a note on this circumstance. The closest examination, which the poor savages afterwards gave it, did *not* suggest Paley's conclusion. That is a troublesome fact. Nor could they well comprehend the use of the watch, even when *explained* to them ! Here I really think the illustration, in some respects, rather happy. For man in examining Nature to find God is like a savage examining a watch—(let me add)—by *Twilight* !

Paley, at the very outset of his *Natural Theology*, makes an inadvertent admission, which overthrows his whole argument, and utterly destroys the pretended parallel between the watch and the Universe. His words are, "It requires indeed some *previous* knowledge of the subject, to perceive and understand it!" Have we, then, according to the Natural Theologians, such previous knowledge of the Designs of God?

It is true, indeed, that the beautiful order, the marvellous adaptation, and arrangement, of all things, both in the natural and moral worlds, is such as must strike, with reverent wonder, the mind of every man, who is not dead to all perception of loveliness, or insensible, as lifeless rock, to the grandeur of this majestic Universe. It is true, that we may discover some, and believe in the existence of many, subtle agencies ever at work throughout the length and breadth of Nature's domains. But "Can we by searching find out God?" The ONE—the ETERNAL—the IMMORTAL—the INVISIBLE—who hath created, and who controls all?—The Hebrew prophet makes lowly confession, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself!"

In Nature, as in the works of Art, the perfect structure of various parts will prove but little. It is only from the fitness of the *whole* to some exalted end, that a Designer of that mighty whole can be legitimately inferred. We acknowledge the elasticity of the spring;—oftentimes we may see the mutual fitness of the wheels, the cogs, the cylinder, the

chain. But we are in blank ignorance of the secret system wherewith this wondrous machine doth harmonize! And thus to the Horologe of the Universe, there is no Index! — no mystic hand! — no startling sound, pealing forth to announce the mysterious END and PURPOSE of Creation!

SECTION II.

OF THE THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT *A POSTERIORI*.

WE have now seen, That the Argument “from Final Causes,” or “from Design,” is wholly untenable, as an Argument. That it does not, and cannot, prove that for which it is brought forward. That it is not what it pretends to be, a sound *à posteriori* Argument, from Effect to Cause, such as would be justified by Proposition II. From which it is easy to gather this inference, That natural Theology, so far as it depends on this Argument, is a groundless speculation.

But it may now be said—Although the Argument from Design is incorrect, as an Argument, yet the conclusion at which it arrives (or one very like it) may be obtained, even on those very principles which we have ourselves admitted. Thus, if our fundamental axiom be true, that “Whatever begins to be must have a cause ;” then, every commencement, or change, of being, in Nature, may conduct us at once to a Cause ; which Cause is God. And if a simple fact of nature may thus prove a Cause ; *à fortiori*, “facts of fitness,” such as we have allowed to exist, must undoubtedly prove as much. From which it would seem, that, even on our own showing, this first Doctrine of a purely natural Theology, from which all others must flow, might clearly be established.

In reply to this, I would distinctly confess, as I before allowed, that this is a sound argument *à posteriori*. I admit, that from certain facts of Nature it is not only fair, but inevitable, (according to the fundamental Axiom and Proposition II.) to argue *some* Cause; but I shall endeavour to shew that this is the *whole* Conclusion of this Argument; and that this is all that the "Argument from Final Causes" (if it had been perfectly correct) could pretend to prove. This Conclusion is so very indistinct, that, for all practical purposes, it might as well never have been drawn; if the world had, from the first, been left without any communication from God himself. That there is, truly, a high purpose answered by this almost instinctive reference from Nature to its Great Cause, which is so universal among men, may well be allowed; even if that end were no other than to lift man's thoughts or aspirations above self and nature, and "prepare the way" for the coming of their God. I am now only anxious to shew, that the certain knowledge which we have (for certain it is) of some Cause of all things, which is Intelligence, is not sufficient to furnish the rudest outline of a Theology purely Natural. Most of the remarks which I shall here make will equally apply to the *à priori* Argument of Dr. Clarke, on which I shall hereafter enlarge.

The whole of Natural Theology must depend on this question—What can we learn, from Nature alone, of that Intelligence which is the Cause of all things?—and I desire, with all fairness, to take into consideration the very utmost that the Naturalist may allege.

First of all—Can we, from any thing in Nature,

decide on the truth of the Unity of God ?—for this, I suppose, must be the centre of every Theological System. I pretend not, on this or on subsequent points, to make only new observations, or adduce none but new objections ; but I am desirous of placing the old ones on their proper footing—as objections which the Christian has nothing to do with ; which affect not *his* Theology ; but which utterly subvert and destroy the sand-built edifice of the mere Naturalist. Christianity is Demonstrative : to talk, therefore, of *objections* to it, sounds, in the ears of the well-informed and philosophic Christian, just as absurd, as to talk of objections to any known truth of Mathematics, to the expert Mathematician.¹ But the Objections which may occur to me, whether old or new, I shall unsparingly urge, because they are necessarily destructive of Naturalism.

I would therefore commence by asking, whether the notion of ONE self-existent Being, who made all things, and subsisted before all things, can be entertained with any distinctness by the minds of Men, even when brought before them ; much less, whether they could of themselves have arrived at such a notion ?—There is a lonely grandeur about it, which is as far removed from our natural sympathies, as its immensity is from our finite grasp ! The more we may strive after a conception² of it, the more con-

¹ Observe, there may be difficulties to be solved, both in Theology and Mathematics ; but objections to any Truth in either Science there cannot be.

² “Conception” results from an act of Understanding, and not from an act of Reason. This and many other important verbal distinctions have been well defended by Coleridge.

founded we shall be. “It is high, we cannot attain unto it.”—A Being ONE, yet everywhere! must seem, to the Human Understanding, a contradiction; for we cannot understand, or conceive of, Omnipresence, except as Ubiquity; thus “translating an idea of reason into the language of sense.” The further we search into nature, the more difficult will appear the notion of ONE God. The inconsistency of Evil and Good flowing from *one* source, would lead us to suppose a Duality, if not a Plurality, of Gods: while the boundless extent of the Universe might incline us to embrace this latter Hypothesis, in preference to the former.

It is not a little extraordinary, that every writer on the subject, both ancient and modern, hastily passes over, or evades, the Doctrine of the Unity of the Deity; though every thing, of course, must depend on it. It is undeniable that all the ancients, except the descendants of Abraham, believed in *many* Gods; and, indeed, even that extraordinary nation, who had had such ample means for becoming acquainted with the ONE Jehovah, seemed to have an irresistible “natural” propensity to believe in other Gods; which inveterate tendency, it took a thousand years of prophecy, miracle, and revelation,—of interposition, threatening, and judgments, effectually to cure. This powerful fact might, of itself, convince us, that the Unity of God is a Revealed and not a Natural Doctrine.

Further—Is it not remarkable, that there is not to be found, in all Grecian and Roman antiquity, one single Argument for the Unity of God? In the works of their best Philosophers, as for instance, in the

Metaphysics of Aristotle, there are sentiments almost openly Atheistic. Even the Parmenides of Plato cannot be counted an exception to this statement; for, in the discourse of that profound Dialogue, the super-essential One, Τὸ Ἐν, is rather *assumed* than proved.

It is sufficient to see, in corroboration of this, with what avidity every sentence, line, or even disjointed phrase, of the Ancients, is seized upon by us, as affording ground for hope, that they held some of the truths of our Theology. I can only say, that when I have turned to the passages quoted, I have too often found, that the sense put upon them is such as would never have been discovered without the assistance of a very skilful commentator; and, frequently, without violating the ordinary rules of grammar. Indeed, so metamorphosed are these soi-disant "quotations," in their transfer from their original Author, that it is sometimes a tax upon one's ingenuity to discover the passage at all, in its primeval state, or even one that looks like it. "If any practical sense of the Unity and Personality of the Supreme Being existed at all among the Ancient Philosophers, it is to be found in the sentiments of Socrates."¹ Such is the remark of the learned Bishop of Chester. Now, whether we take the opinions of Socrates from Plato or from Xenophon,² we shall come to the conclusion, that

¹ Bishop Sumner's *Records of Creation*, Vol. I. p. 243, where there are many judicious remarks on this subject.

² The character of Socrates, as given by Plato, has but little in common with that by Xenophon. The latter seems a vainglorious *philosophe*, by the side of the almost apostolic meekness, simplicity, and wisdom, of the former.

they were of the most confused and contradictory kind. In the well-known discussion, for instance, between Socrates and Aristodemus, recorded by Xenophon, (where there are some remarks which resemble the modern "Argument from Design,") he frequently, as Bishop J. B. Sumner observes, betrays a belief in Polytheism, by speaking of "the Gods;" and the same remark may be made on the whole recorded sentiments of this greatest luminary of ancient Philosophy. The Parmenides of Plato has even seemed, to some, to contain a mysterious kind of Atheism; while the Cratylus openly recognizes the grossest dogmas of the Mythology of Paganism. And though I do not think that Socrates is chargeable with all the opinions put forth in his name, yet I am justified in drawing the conclusion, that this greatest and best of "Natural" Philosophers does not *appear* to have had a *certain* knowledge of One God.

The modern writers on Theology—whether advocates of Design, or believers in Revelation, are just as much at a loss to prove the unity of God,¹ by natural reasoning, as were the Ancients. Paley himself is obliged to confess, at the end of his Chapter on this subject—"Certain however it is, that the whole Argument for the Divine Unity goes no further than a unity of *Counsel*!" But even this is assuming too much; for while a single discord can be found, in all nature, it is too much to affirm that there is a perfect and universal Unity of Counsel, if it be only allowed that the Deity "*doeth* according to his Will in the armies of Heaven, and among the inhabitants

¹ See the whole Library of "Bridgewater Treatises."

of the Earth." I should, however, look with some degree of astonishment upon the man who would assure me, that "Unity of Counsel" proved Unity of Person!

The Doctrine of the Unity of the Deity is intimately connected with that of his Personality. Dr. Paley treats first of Personality; and in so doing he is, of course, obliged to *assume* the Truth of Unity. And this is no fault fairly chargeable on his Argument; for, by the necessity of the case, whichever is treated of first, the other must, for the time being, be assumed. But Paley might have spared his lengthy Chapter on this subject; unless it was his wish to give us a specimen of "arguing in a circle." For, he strangely defines a "Person" to be, "that which can contrive and design," and then gravely proceeds to *infer*, that 'every designing Mind or Intelligence is a Person!' It may be of use however to consider, a little more minutely than this, what is really implied by the word PERSONALITY.

The word "Unity" is the opposite of "Plurality;" at least, it is so used in the Modern Theology: on the other hand, the word "Personality" is the opposite of "Diffusion" of Essence, or Universality; so that "Person" may be defined as the Concentration of Essence. In the Platonic Philosophy there does not seem to have been any distinction made between

¹ A Foreigner would be shown, as a rare savage, who from perceiving the Unity of certain "Counsels" of the British Parliament, should conclude that the Parliament was but one person; and thence "argue," that the phrase "House of Commons" might be used to signify his Town Residence!

Personality and Unity; because the Unity in the Godhead was not treated of as interfering, in any way, with the opinion of a plurality of Gods. The Platonic Trinity, of which *To 'Ev* was the first Hypostasis, must, I think, be regarded in the same manner as the Platonic notion of "Matter,"—viz., as a "Pura Potentia,"—a mere Possibility. I consider it as almost an abstract Idea; the conceivable fount of Deity—"fons Deitatis." According to Plato, Unity might be predicated of a Multitude of Beings; for every Intelligence is a Unit, and so far participates of the Divine Nature, *το ἐν*, which is also *το ἓν*. And I know not whether he or any of his followers ever thus extended his idea; but it is by no means inconceivable to me, that every Cause or Intelligence, however finite, may be a "Trinity in Unity:" by which expression, I mean, that in ONE Rational Being there is, at once, Essence, Intelligence, and Life. How much light this might throw on the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, I cannot here consider, without wandering too far from my immediate object. But I cannot forbear the reflection, that it is no sign of Intellect or Knowledge to reject the Doctrine of the Trinity as *unreasonable*, unless the rejecters are prepared to explain to us, What is Identity? What is Essence?—which Locke professed himself unable to do.

Since, then, as has been said, the idea of the Unity of God is now opposed to "Plurality," it evidently implies something very distinct from "Personality," which may be attributed to many Beings. But the ancient notion of "Unity," and the modern "Per-

sonality," seem to a great extent alike; for it is a tenet of both Aristotle and Plato, that Identity is a certain Unity.

It will be found, on reflection, that our notion of Personality is derived, in the same manner as that of Causation, or any other simple Truth of Intellect—viz., from *ourselves*. Intelligence is not Personality, though it is included in it. We are conscious that we possess Intelligence; and we discover that our power of exerting it is confined within certain limits. The idea which we obtain by that discovery is the idea of "Personality." We see around us indications of the same kind of Intelligence in other men; but should we conclude them to possess "Personality," if we did not see them to possess finite Bodies, and a power of acting within certain *Limits*?—The Laws of the Twelve Tables indicate Intelligence;¹ but does any one suppose them, therefore, to have originated from one "person?"—We are, indeed, accustomed to see Intelligence connected with Personality, but there may be no reason, in the nature of things, why Intelligence should be personal, at all. Judging, therefore, by natural light alone, I do not wonder that Fichte should have thought, that "Personality could not be attributed to God, without making him a finite Being like ourselves." Whoever will deeply reflect on the point, will, I think, see an inconsistency in the notions of Infinity and Personality. If the right definition of Person be—Intelligence confined to certain Limits—(and every person of which we know any thing agrees

¹ Cicero De Oratore, c. i. sec. 195.

with this Definition) how can natural reasoning conclude, that the INFINITE GOD is a Person ?

But not only are we unable, by the unaided efforts of our own understanding, to arrive at a knowledge either of the unity or personality of God ; but all his attributes are necessarily involved in equal darkness, whether we argue from abstract principles, or from the facts of Nature. We are surrounded on every hand with the most contradictory phenomena. How can we reconcile the numberless miseries which we see around us, which are not a thousandth part of the agonies of the “whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together” from the first until now, with the belief of the perfect benevolence, the unerring wisdom, and limitless power of God ? When I look abroad into the works of Nature, I may point to the poisonous plant, and the venomous reptile, and turn to the Natural Theologian, who is so fond of the word, and inquiringly mutter forth “Design !” When I look among men, and behold the miseries that afflict this “world of ours,” I ask, when should I be able to exhaust this teeming subject ?—But there are, and have ever been, unutterable human woes, which the pen of the eloquent has never described, which the verse of the poet has painted not, nor the volume of the historian recorded !—but which have taken up their lasting abode in the hearts of the wretched ! What fearful enigmas are these to the Natural Theologian ! Yet I dwell not on the numbers, or the poignancy, of human sufferings (those bitter truths that no sophistry can hide !) ; I am desirous in this place to appeal rather to the

judgment than to the feelings of any man. I ask any one to look into the books of the Natural Theologians and see with what weapons they combat these unanswerable facts. Let it not be said that the same difficulties present themselves to the Christian;—it is not so. The Christian Revelation solves our difficulties, and discovers a remedy for our evils. The Christian knows that “God made man upright,” but that he sought out evil for himself; to have destroyed the possibility of which, God must have destroyed the agency of man, and made him a mere *ἡμῶν μηχανή* *ὄργανον*—a machine—an instrument. But the Naturalist has no such facts to rely on; and the weighty amount of evil in the world must crush his system. It is easy to smooth over, with plausible sophisms, any faithful representations of the natural and moral condition of a world where goodness withers, and every noxious evil rankly flourishes; where virtue often suffers, and vice is triumphant. It is easy to put forth, in bold relief, the “Manifestations of Beneficence,” and keep in the back ground, or sketch in a few hasty strokes, every thing of an apparently opposite character! It is easy; and, therefore, it is popular. But is it honest? Is this a fearless following after Truth? Can any man of unshrinking candour confess himself satisfied—on natural grounds—by seeing merely a *balance* struck in favour of Almighty goodness? What is it but mere special pleading, to argue that the *general* character, the “paramount tendency” of God’s creation is good?

I charge it on the Natural Deist to reflect, that on

his principles he must appeal to the boundless power of God, and if but one solitary evil be found in his dominions, he must impeach his goodness! For how mighty an effect must the introduction of an infinite quantity produce in these calculations. There is no refuge from this conclusion, but in Christianity. Infinite goodness and power are inconsistent with the existence of one evil,—one misery. One misery! O what mockery to the Naturalist is there in those words! In truth there is but little need to open the volume of the world's history! What a catalogue of recollections does not every man possess! What a black succession of crimes and woes, that this earth has witnessed, will at the bidding of any man,

“Come treoping up
Like spirits from the realm of Night!”

I would not ask, whether there ever was one perfectly happy man on earth? but I would even ask, whether to any man, who has no Religion but that of Nature, there falls one unalloyed and lasting pleasure?

When the first man left the garden of his innocence and joy, it withered! The world knows not where it stood! and the happiness that was found there is now only remembered, in the annals of the recording prophet, in the lament of the poet, or the philosopher's fruitless research!

Yet it is no difficult thing for men of narrow minds, or selfish pursuits, to forget, or act as if they had forgotten, all the calamities which come not within the sphere of their immediate knowledge. But their

forgetfulness will not blot out misery from the book of being. It exists, though we may try to smother the remembrance of it.¹ I can very well conceive that a man who has even much philanthropy in his nature, if he finds himself surrounded with every thing that makes life desirable — if his youthful anticipations have been realized, or exceeded — if he be greeted abroad, and looked up to in his own circle — will have a high notion of the happiness of earth ! He has seen but the golden side of human life. The most wintry day has brought him no diminution, but possibly a change, or even an increase, of the happiness of his home. It may not occur to him, that he is singularly blessed. The sunshine of his own happiness has dazzled his eyes, so that he can see but little else. I can imagine, that such an one might, with unquivering pen, indite the following passage :—

“ It is a happy world after all ! The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a Spring noon, or a Summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view.” “ The insect youth are on the wing—Swarms of new-born flies are trying their pinions in the air, &c. &c.” “ If we look to what the waters produce ; shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margin of rivers, of lakes, and

¹ How little is it considered, that those “ common blessings ” of English plenty, often carelessly massed together in the pregnant phrase “ the comforts of life,” are not possessed by one in a thousand of the human race. But, necessary as these are to happiness, does any one suppose them to *constitute* it, even when possessed ?

of the sea itself. These are so happy that they know not what to do with themselves!¹ Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps out of the water, their frolics in it, (which I have noticed a thousand times with equal attention and amusement) all conduce to shew their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of this excess," &c.² "What a sum of gratification and pleasure have we here before our view!"³

Now what is the plain, stern, answer of natural common sense, to all this far-fetched rhapsody?—Simply this; That buzzing insects, sportive birds, and leaping fishes, do *not* constitute a "happy world."⁴ Is this, indeed, a world of happiness?⁵ Let any

¹ If this be the happiness of fishes, the anglers (and Dr. Paley was one) cannot boast of contributing very largely to it. If they "know not what to do with themselves," their angling friends attempt to teach them.

² *Query.* Does a fish leap up for no other object than to demonstrate his happiness?

³ See Paley's Natural Theology, Chap. 26. It must be a dire necessity indeed which could drive any one to such arguments as these. I am surprised, beyond the power of expression, that "flies," which often sting and torment, and were sent as a curse on Egypt; that "birds," which fly from man as their natural enemy; that "fishes," which prey on each other, and are preyed on by man; should be brought to prove that this is a "happy world after all!"

⁴ If a Spaniard should presume to doubt that Spain was a happy Kingdom, would it be likely to convince him of the reverse, to point out with what keen "gratification" his mule devours his food? Is England happy, simply *because* the swine are well fed?

⁵ If Dr. Paley really thought this world a happy one "after all," I can only conclude, that he was an exception to the general rule of Humanity, and had experienced less than most of our race, "that Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards."

man, of ordinary feelings and average understanding, think but one moment of the strange inquiry. He will not need to ransack air, earth, and sea, to find an answer. Let him walk half a mile from home, on a winter's morning—it surely will not be passing strange if he meet men, women, or children, half-clothed, and exposed to the drifting snow or rain. It may be that they are travelling to some distant town, in search of precarious employ; and they have no place of rest, even for a night, on their journey. Or, perhaps, they are homeless wanderers, outcasts from society. He may bestow on them a trifling alms, and give them to taste the bliss of momentary gratitude (a deep, a real bliss, which the miserable know how to prize!)—They pass on their lonely way; and he on his. He arrives at a near country town. There, if he have an appetite for reading, he may take up some journal of the doings of the great ones of the earth; some daily bulletin of the war between law and crime; or of the strife between the oppressors and the oppressed. If this view of humanity please not, let him pass to the abodes of the shivering and hungry poor; or to the hospital of the sick and dying! Let him breathe infectious air; and witness the sigh of the diseased, or the gasp of the expiring! Let him not wonder, if, from some desolate bed, a stifled murmur reach him (a horrid sound, half-imprecation, half-prayer!). Thence let him depart; and remember, that this is ENGLAND!—the happiest land on the surface of God's Earth! and if then he could return to his home, his fire-side, and his study, and write—"It is a happy world after all"—and could not envy either his head or his heart!

To return to our Argument:—It appears that, by the unassisted efforts of Nature, we could no more arrive at a knowledge of the Character, than of the Personality or Unity of God. The union of goodness, wisdom, and power, in the Creator and Governor of the Universe, seems incredible, on natural grounds. The other attributes which the Natural Theologians ascribe to God, are the imagined opposites of all imperfection; or hyperboles, which the human mind strives vainly to conceive.¹

I conclude, therefore, that though, without a revelation, we might arrive at a certain knowledge that there was a Cause (or Causes) for all things in Nature; yet we could never tell, whether there was only one Cause? or, whether there were many?—We could not know even the Personality of any such Cause, nor the moral character of it; we *must* disbelieve either its wisdom, its goodness, or its power. So that not one single truth of Theology could, by any possibility, be arrived at, on Natural principles.²

The legitimate natural argument from Causation is,

¹ What, for instance, can any finite Being understand of the meaning of such a word as Omnipotent? or, indeed, of any word beginning with “*Omni*?”

² Of course there could be no species of natural *Religion*, or Worship, if there be no Natural Theology. A Being or Beings of whose personality or character, we know nothing, could not be worshipped by us. Socrates, with all his wisdom, thought prayer to be superfluous, to Gods who do not change their minds. The idea of Worship certainly does not seem to be a natural one. In fact, the absurdity of Deistical “Worship” was evident enough in the French Revolution. It was laughed down, by the very populace.

then, for all practical purposes, as useless as the modern "Argument from Final Causes." But facts are as much against the Natural Theologians as Arguments are. We may challenge them to show one purely Natural Theologian in all antiquity. And it would, perhaps, be as impossible to produce one modern Philosopher, who firmly believes in God on purely Natural grounds, as to find an ancient who believed rightly in God at all. I will venture the assertion that neither the Argument from Causation, nor the fictitious "Argument from Design," ever satisfied any but a Believer in Revelation ; who had other grounds, of course, for his faith, and, consequently, was not led to examine the Arguments, as such, with very jealous scrutiny. Nothing is more easy than for a Christian to embrace the Truths of Theology on other grounds, and afterwards learn an argument in their defence, and then even persuade himself that his faith and hope in God depend upon it ! But it is no less true, that the most learned Christians, and the acutest Philosophers, have looked with suspicion upon the pretended Theology of the Doctors of Design.

In confirmation of these remarks, be it observed, that (to select a strong case) no one was a warmer Defender of the "Argument from Final Causes" than Voltaire. Lord Brougham himself does not surpass him in zeal. Yet, warmly as he defended it, he did not seem to have been *half convinced* by it ; though, at times, he expressed himself strongly ; especially when writing against any Christian who disputed his Doctrine. Pascal, on the other hand—the thoughtful, and truly Christian, Pascal—

altogether rejected "Natural Theology." He boldly confesses:—

"Je n'entreprendrai pas de prouver ici, par des raisons naturelles, ou l'existence de Dieu, ou la Trinité, ou l'Immortalité de l'ame; parce que je ne me sentirais pas assez fort pour trouver dans la Nature, de quoi convaincre des Athées endurcis." Whereupon, Voltaire, exclaims, with indignant astonishment, "Encore une fois! Est il possible, que ce soit Pascal! qui ne se sent pas assez fort pour prouver l'existence de Dieu!"¹ But, at other times, this same stanch advocate of Natural Theology, expresses himself in the most doubtful manner; shewing plainly that, in spite of his boasting, he was "not half convinced." Not to dwell on such phrases as "Tout douteur que je suis"—which abound in his writings—when treating expressly of this subject, he takes refuge in the assurance, that no one can prove God to be an Impossibility! His words are "Dans le *doute* où nous sommes tous deux vous ne m'en démontrerez pas l'impossibilité, de même que je ne puis vous démontrer mathématiquement que la chose est ainsi!" I might quote many such passages from the voluminous works of this champion of Natural Theology and "Final Causes," to prove his scepticism towards God. At one time he owns it an unsettled point; and, at another, he leaves it to the sagacious reader to decide; ("et il examinera long-tems, avant de pouvoir juger.") But one passage is too remarkable to be omitted or abridged. It may

¹ Melanges de Philosophie, Vol. XIII.

² Qu. sur l'Encyc. Art. Dieu, p. 283, et p. 298.

be considered as a fair summary of Natural Theology.¹

La Philosophie nous montre bien qu'il y a un [?] Dieu, mais elle est impuissante à nous apprendre, ce qu'il est, ce qu'il fait, comment et pourquoi il le fait ; s'il est dans le tems, s'il est dans l'espace, s'il a commandé une fois, ou s'il agit toujours ; s'il est dans la matière, s'il n'y est pas, *et cetera, et cetera.* *Il faudrait être lui-même pour le savoir !*"

The concluding line of this Confession, which I have printed in Italics, contains a species of sarcasm, which I can give no name to, without coining a word—it is a true *Voltaireism*.

Such, finally, is the plain confession of the Natural Theologian. That we, literally, know nothing at all about the matter. Such is the conclusion to which "Natural reasoning" conducted Voltaire.²

The argument *à posteriori* must therefore be rejected, as insufficient:—the argument from design, as inaccurate.

It is well known, that Descartes considered this latter to be even of an impious character: and, from a passage in his Lectures, Dr. Brown himself may be concluded to be almost of that opinion.³ I bring not,

¹ El. of Newtonian Philosophy, first part, first chapter.

² Who, according to the anecdote retailed by Lord Brougham, was liable to ridicule "for excess of religious principle!"

³ See Lecture X. But the following Extracts from the Notes to his "Enquiry," will seem, I think, to most religious minds, to border closely on profanity, however remote that intention might be from the professor. It, in fact, denies God to be the CAUSE of his own purposes. "The consideration of that virtue, which Adversity would tend to produce, would be the CAUSE of that Divine purpose,

now, any such charge against it. Whether such be the natural tendency of the "Doctrine of Final Causes," I leave to every one to decide for himself.¹ But no one can be doubtful as to the reason which Infidels have for defending it so warmly; after seeing what we here have proved; and after the plain avowal of Voltaire, that strong advocate of Design. The most hardened sceptic may embrace it; for, it *leads to nothing*, either in Theology or Religion, Multitudes of the half-learned, fashionable Discourers, by admitting the "Evidences of Design in Nature," or (which they conceive to be the same) praising the Argument à posteriori, deceive the superficial and the charitable, who would start with horror from an avowed Deist. These men find it convenient to pass thus for liberal and enlightened Believers; because open Deism is not quite fashionable yet; and they are able to remain wholly religionless, and find a justification for so remaining in the obscurity of this deceitful dogma!

The Believer in Revelation, alone, has any right to entertain the Doctrine of Design. When, on higher and more substantial grounds, the Christian has embraced his Holy Religion, this Doctrine may be brought forward, to *illustrate* the Revealed Character of God. The Christian, however lowly, however

or volition, in consequence of which Adversity exists?" See p. 498. According to which impious doctrine, God himself is acted upon by abstract ideas—is no agent at all—but subject to some other power!

¹ The unfair manner in which a detached verse or two of Scripture have been represented as favourable to Natural Theology, is noticed in Part III.

unphilosophical, will find a "joy unspeakable," in thus contemplating the glories even of this lower world ;—

" His are the mountains, and the vallies his,
And the resplendent rivers !—his to enjoy,
With a propriety that none can feel,
But who with filial reverence endued,
Can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say—' My Father made them all.' "¹

¹ Cowper.

SECTION III.

OF THE THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT A PRIORI.

It is now concluded,

1st, That the "Argument from Final Causes" is untenable, inasmuch as it does not result from the true Doctrine of Causation; it is inconsistent with all the principles of sound argumentation; and is clearly a mere *petitio principii*.

2ndly, That the Argument *à posteriori*, for the Being of God, is sound and correct, as far as it goes; and, indeed, inevitably results from the true Doctrine of Causation, contained in Propositions I and II. But this Argument will not teach us anything of the character of the Deity; or even lead us to a knowledge of his Unity, or his Personality.

These two conclusions are corroborated, by every fact which the history of the world has recorded. We now proceed to show,

3rdly, That the Argument *à priori*, so ably defended by Dr. Clarke, goes just as far as the Argument *à posteriori*; but no farther. That is; it shews the necessity of some Cause; but cannot prove the necessity of either its Unity, or Personality; and, therefore, of course, no other of its Attributes.

Indeed, Dr. Clarke does not enter at all, strictly speaking, on the proof of the Personality of the Deity.

If he had directed his attention more fully to this subject, I think that he could hardly have failed to see the fallacy of his Argument for Unity.

In examining the profound reasoning of so careful a disputant as Clarke, it is indispensable to pay a more than usual attention, to the value of every word in a sentence. I shall, therefore, be obliged to trace, from the beginning, his Argument for the Divine Unity; in order to see at what precise point an undue assumption is made, and error in the reasoning commences.

Bishop J. B. Sumner has remarked, That there is one proposition in Metaphysics which no Sceptic has ever had the hardihood to call in question; viz., "That something must have existed from Eternity." The truth of this proposition appears, from the absurdity of supposing that this world, and the beings which inhabit it, could have come into existence, if there ever had been an absolute and universal nothing. From our own existence, and the existence of numberless other beings, we conclude "That something must have existed from Eternity," by, what is called, the *Reductio ad absurdum*.¹ From this undeniable proposition Dr. Clarke sets out.

The second step in his Argument is this. To suppose an infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings (as we undoubtedly are) to be

¹ An objection is sometimes raised to the "Argument" which is called by this name. But this can only be from the want of considering (what I believe will be found to be the case invariably) that the very test of *every* good Argument, in proof of a Truth, is, that it is equivalent to a *Reductio ad absurdum*.

produced by each other, from everlasting, is also absurd. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude, That there must be *at least* one independent unchanging Being, who has ever existed.

The third step in the reasoning is, That such Eternal Being is underived ; which is signified by the word self-existent ; because it is also absurd to suppose, either any previously Existing Being ; or that any Being could have been originated from Nothing, without a Cause.

Thus far the assumptions are fairly made, and the reasoning appears to me to be wholly satisfactory, and in perfect accordance with our first axiom "That whatever begins to be must have a Cause ;" and with our three Propositions deduced therefrom. But at this point an assumption is made, which, being neither self-evident, nor proved, may be fairly disputed. This assumption, as will be seen, is made by means of an ambiguous word, on the twofold meaning of which¹ we have already dwelt at some length ; and of which ambiguity an advantage is subsequently taken, by Dr. Clarke, to prove the Unity of the Deity.

The words of this part of the Argument are these ; "That unchangeable and independent Being, which has existed from Eternity, without any external Cause of its existence, must be self-existent, *that is* necessarily existing !"

Now this word "necessarily existing" conveys to my mind a totally distinct idea from the word

¹ I must beg that pages 41, 42, and 43 of this Dissertation be here reconsidered.

“self-existent.” It may be quite true that every self-existent Being is necessarily existing, and that every necessarily-existing Being is self-existent (just as every equilateral triangle is equiangular, and every equiangular triangle is equilateral)—but, in either case, the two *words* are clearly expressive of two ideas.

And so close a reasoner as Clarke would not have introduced this word, “necessarily existing,” without he gained something by it; for, as it afterwards appears, his whole argument depends on it. Although therefore, he gives this word as a definition of “self-existent,” he must have been aware that it was not synonymous with it; but meant something *more*. Indeed, if this were not the case, why did he introduce the word at all? Yet in a following sentence, in which he endeavours to explain himself more fully, it seems difficult to know, whether he intends the two words to be synonymous, or only deduces the latter idea from the former. His words are “To be self-existent is not to be produced by itself; for that is an express contradiction. But it is (which is the only idea we can frame of self-existence, and without which the word seems to have no signification at all) it is, I say, to exist by an absolute necessity, originally in the nature of the thing itself.”¹

Now this last line contains more than has yet been proved; and, be it observed, only a little more. But that little will appear to be of the utmost conse-

¹ Clarke's Demonstration, pr. 3 p. 14. —Ed. Glasgow, 1823.

quence. This will become evident by a brief analysis of the component parts of the Argument, so far as we have admitted it to be valid. They may be placed in the following order,

1st. We know that many dependent Beings like ourselves exist.

2nd. To suppose an eternal succession of such dependent Beings, seems absurd ;

3rd. Therefore, there must be *at least* one independent Being,

4th. Who is of course underived, and hence called self-existent.

5th. Such a self-existent Being must exist from the necessity of his own Nature.

This last sentence is the same as that which was quoted from Dr. Clarke, with the exception of the word "absolute," which certainly does not seem deducible from what went before ; and, being joined to the word "necessity," gives rise to the whole fallacy.

These five sentences are, I think, a fair and natural series of Observations, which result from one another, and all depend on the first ; and, in reference to that, I ask,—Does any one think, that dependent beings, like ourselves, exist by so " absolute a necessity," that it would be a contradiction in the nature of things, to suppose that we might not have existed ? I freely confess, that I can conceive the *possibility* of Immortal and Independent Beings having existed without us, or any such as we are. For, to suppose them to have stood in need of us, would be to make them Dependent, not Independent, Beings. So that I see

no "contradiction in the nature of things" in supposing, that Created Beings might never have been created. And from this I argue, that as the fourth Observation above, which affirmed the Existence of a Self-Existent Being, results from the first, and could not be deduced without the first, which affirmed our own Existence; and as our own Existence is not "absolutely necessary," in the strictest sense of that word; so the Being whose Existence is deduced therefrom, in the fourth observation, is not proved to have an "absolute" but only a "relative necessity" for Existence; viz., as the first link in a Chain of Being.

It is of the highest importance to discern the difference between Absolute and Relative necessity; which belong to two distinct Classes of Truths. I shall, therefore, take pains to be explicit on the point.

Absolute Necessity may only be predicated of a thing, when it could not possibly be supposed to be non-existent, without supposing what would be a contradiction in the nature of things. Thus, absolute necessity may be predicated of a Mathematical Truth. For, if there had never existed two perfectly parallel lines, it yet would be an absolutely necessary truth, that parallel lines produced ad infinitum, would never meet. It would be an utter impossibility, a "contradiction in the nature of things," to suppose it otherwise. Or, if there had never existed a single right-angled triangle, it would be quite as "absolutely necessary," and eternally true, that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the squares of the

other two sides, as if the whole Universe had consisted of nothing else but right-angled triangles.

But Relative Necessity is predicated of that which is necessary, *under the circumstances*. A thing has a relative necessity when it cannot now (or in any given case) be otherwise than it is; though there might be no contradiction in the nature of things, in supposing, that it might *possibly* have been otherwise. In this sense, necessity may be predicated of any past historical fact; which, *now*, cannot be obliterated, so to speak, from existence; yet which, at one time, might not have taken place; because there appears no such antecedent, mathematical necessity for it, as that its non-existence would be a “contradiction in the nature of things.”

This distinction, between Absolute and Relative Necessity, may be thus symbolically illustrated.

If A exists, *then* B must necessarily exist. But C *must* exist necessarily; without A or B or any other Being.

In which statement, B is the representative of Relative Necessity, and C of the Absolute. If B be “self-existent” also, then it may be said to exist by the necessity of *its own* nature; which is *relative* to A. But the self-existent C exists *absolutely*, and by an Eternal necessity, in the Universal nature of things.

If any one, however, prefer to say, that every Self-existent Being exists by the “absolute necessity” of its own Nature—I do not mind the words he may use, so long as he does not *assume*, that the term “Absolute” implies that the non-existence of self-

existent Beings cannot be supposed without a contradiction in the nature of things, *i. e.* a Mathematical Impossibility. But the instant he assumes this, he assumes more than is proved; and I, therefore, disallow it. And as the word "absolute" is not only liable to mislead, but actually misled Dr. Clarke, I cannot help thinking, that it would be better not to use it, in any such doubtful sense.

When I say that Self-existent Beings (until they are proved to be something more than that) can only be said to have a relative necessity for their existence, I do not thereby throw any uncertainty on their existence, since I do not even except my own; for I wholly deny that there appears any mathematical necessity for my Existence. I admit some "Self-existent Being," because nothing else will explain the phenomena of "Dependent Beings." And, as Self-existence must, of course, be underived from any other source, I allow that a Self-existent Being must exist from the necessity "of his own nature." But that very expression ["of his own nature"] implies a particular and "relative," and not a universal and "absolute" Necessity. Which same conclusion, as I have before hinted, would also result, from considering the Personality of the "Self-existent Being."

But, I repeat, the words "necessity," and "necessarily existing," are ambiguous words; and their Introduction can be of no good use; for if they mean more than Self-Existence (and absolute¹ Mathematical Necessity certainly implies much more)—that enlarged meaning *remains to be proved*. If they mean

¹ Dr. Clarke's instance of absolutely necessary truth is $2 + 2 = 4$.

no more than self-existence, that one word is sufficient, and the other, which is so very ambiguous, should be discarded.

Immediately after the conclusion of that Argument of Dr. Clarke, from which we made the last quotation, it seems to be taken for granted, that necessary existence is established, as firmly as self-existence; for he gives no new proof of it. Accordingly, when he comes to demonstrate the Unity of the Deity his Argument is as follows;—

“To suppose two or more distinct Beings, existing of themselves, necessarily and independent of each other, implies this plain contradiction, That each of them, being independent from the other, they may, either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist; and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing!”

The answer to which, is plain from the foregoing observations. We do *not* suppose these two distinct self-existent Beings to exist by any “absolute” necessity of universal Nature; but only by the necessity of their *own* Nature; which is relative.

And further; we cannot suppose the non-existence of any self-existent Being, without supposing also the non-existence of all those Beings which depended thereon. And if there be any self-existent Beings, which have no subordinate Beings dependent on them, or in any way connected with them, we cannot ever come to know their existence, by any reasonings or observations of ours. And, as to the calamitous consequence, which Dr. Clarke de-

duces, "therefore neither of these will be *necessarily existing*," this is a consequence which does not at all afflict my mind. Inasmuch as neither of the supposed Beings have yet been *proved* to possess that which Dr. Clarke implies by this word. And how these self-existent Beings can lose that which they do not seem to have had, it is for those who advocate that Argument to consider. Indeed, I would venture the assertion that whoever will deeply consider the matter, by the light of Nature alone, will be apt to conclude that no Being, except an Eternal Mind, can, in the strict sense of the term, have any mathematical necessity for existence; and that absolute necessity only can be predicated of the possible relations of Being; and not, in general, of Being itself. For we surely may, without a mathematical contradiction, suppose a Universal Nothing, *i. e.*, an absence of all Being; with this exception to the supposition, that there must only necessarily be some Eternal Mind, wherein Eternal Truths must exist.

I need hardly remark, that the passage concerning the Unity of the Deity, on which I have been dwelling is that which startled Bishop Butler; and which he could not be brought to believe, even though he had the advantage of corresponding with Dr. Clarke himself on the subject. But it seems a little surprising to me, that so impartial and acute a thinker as Butler did not perceive where the fallacy of the Argument lies; viz., in the ambiguous term "*necessarily existing*."¹

¹ The letters of Clarke and Butler, on this subject, appended to

I conclude that it is now sufficiently proved, that the Argument *à priori* no more establishes the truth of the Unity of God, than the Argument *à posteriori*. Though certainly its weakness is not so immediately evident as that of the latter. Dr. Clarke, in a letter appended to his Discourses, writes thus on this subject. "The Unity of God can no otherwise be demonstrated than by considering, *à priori*, the nature of a necessary or self-existent Cause." And this method we have now seen to be fallacious.

It belongs not to this Dissertation to consider that part of Dr. Clarke's Argument which represents space and duration as attributes of the Deity. And few might be disposed to follow me in such a discussion. I would, however, remark, that the objection to Clarke's opinions, on these points, is, perhaps, rather to the form of expression and the *order* of his inferences, than to the real notion entertained. I believe that the followers of Kant, in Germany, hold that our ideas of space and time are not derived from the senses. Which important observation, Berkeley made long since.

Of TIME it may, indeed, be more difficult to speak briefly, without being misunderstood; but SPACE seems, without doubt, to be an attribute of Mind.¹

And here I take leave of the Argument *à priori*, which is certainly the strong hold (the strongest

the Demonstration, and to Butler's Works (Clarendon Edition) are models of patient and thoughtful reasoning.

¹ I mean of all minds, whether finite or not.

hold) of Natural Theology; as it would be useless to go through the consideration of those attributes of Deity, which have before occupied our attention, if the Unity of God cannot first be established.

The whole conclusion of Natural Theology, concerning all the attributes of Deity, is "Clouds and Darkness are round about Him." The Christian alone can add, "Righteousness and Judgment are the habitation of His Throne!"

PART III.

CONCLUSION.

"THY Creatures have been my books, but thy SCRIPTURES much more! I have sought THEE in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found THEE in thy Temples!"

LORD BACON.

SECTION I.

RELIGION, A FINAL CAUSE OF THE HUMAN MIND.

OUR argument has thus far been directed against the alleged proofs of the Fundamental Truths of Natural Theology, viz. those concerning the Being and Character of the "Unknown God" of the Deists. It will be remembered, that it was boasted, That Revelation itself was dependent (see p. 35.) on Natural Theology; because the idea of a Revelation from God, presupposed a belief in his Existence. To which it might have been a sufficient answer to say, That even allowing the necessity of this previous belief, it would not follow from thence, that it was either strictly deducible, or actually deduced, from the principles of natural reasoning; since there are

other sources from which such a belief might, and actually does, arise ; as will hereafter appear. But since we have shown, that the knowledge of one God is not attained, by any of the arguments which have yet been adduced, it may, perhaps, be too much to admit, that a firm and positive belief in one God, is necessary (even if possible) previous to a Revelation.

For let a case be fairly supposed ; That a personage, possessing supernatural power, should appear among men who had no Natural Theology of a clear and certain kind, but only doubtful theories of their own devising. The question would be—Whether the suspension of the wonted laws of nature—the working of benevolent miracles, openly, and undeniably—would not be a fair criterion of his character ; and prove that he was, what he declared himself to be, a Messenger sent from a Benevolent Superior Power—*i. e.* God ? Could those people honestly reject him ; unless it could be shown that his pretensions implied an impossibility ? Or, at least, unless they could demonstrate, that there was an antecedent improbability against *all* Revelations (such as Mr. Hume pretended with regard to Miracles) which no evidence could possibly overcome ?—This, certainly, then, is what the Deist must *prove*, before he can infer that his Natural Theology is a pre-requisite to Revelation. And, until this be proved, such an inference cannot be admitted.

But, I have said, there are *other* sources from which, if it were necessary, some previous, though imperfect, acquaintance with the First Truths of Theology, might be (and indeed actually *is*) attained ; by which

I mean, That the constitution of the mind of man, and the circumstances in which he is placed are sufficient to suggest the probability of Religion; and though they cannot furnish him certainly with one of its truths, yet might make him feel the want of it. And surely if any thing had been necessary, to “prepare the way for the coming” of the Revelation of God to Man, it could not be supposed, that abstract arguments, such as those of the Naturalists, would be of much avail. Indeed the pretence, that Natural Théology is necessary previous to Christianity, is disproved by the nature of the case; as well as by undeniable facts. For what is more absurd, than to suppose, that the mass of mankind (who, if there be a Revelation, are all, of course, alike interested in receiving it) could *previously* pause to satisfy themselves, for instance, of the logical certainty of the existence of a Deity, before they examined a Revelation? I say, then, that if any pre-requisite is to be found, it must be one which could have a more *universal* influence, than any which the Natural Theologians acknowledge. If Revelation be intended for all men—then this pre-requisite must be accessible to all. And such a pre-requisite I find in what I have called the very “Constitution of the Human Mind,” as well as the Circumstances in which Man is placed.

Here my conclusions are substantiated by facts: for it is certain, that the generality of believers have an obscure faith in God, almost by a kind of instinct. They believe in Him, not because they have *proved*, but because they *cannot get rid of* the conviction of, His existence. Their whole Being *tends*

towards it. So that one of our strictest Reasoners, in writing a Philosophical Defence of Christianity, thought himself justified in beginning with the *assumption* of the Being and Attributes of God.¹ Here, then, as in our former conclusions, we argue from the “facts of human nature;” while the Natural Theologians, boasting of inductive reasoning and scientific knowledge, proceed in defiance of all the facts before them—“hypotheses fingere.”

The facts are, beyond all denial, against the Natural Theologians. Thus we find that the Jewish Prophets no where preface a Revelation of the Will of God, with a “Demonstration of his Being and Attributes;” but, rather, with a *Declaration* of them. The Christian Apostles every where *assume* the Existence of “The Living God who made Heaven and Earth and the Sea, and all that are therein.” And what Justin Martyr, in his Dialogue with Trypho,² affirmed of the Hebrew writers, is equally applicable to the Christian:—“οὐ μετα ἀποδείξεως πιποιοῦνται τότε τὰς λόγους, ἀτε ἀνωτέρω πασης ἀποδείξεως ὄντες ἀξιοπιστοὶ μαρτυρεῖς τῆς ἀληθείας.” If Moses and the Prophets were believed by the Jews; and the first teachers of Christianity by multitudes among the Gentiles; without any attempt at a Critical Demonstration of first truths; it follows, that if there were any *predisposing* principle, its influence was derived from *other* sources than abstract reasoning. And such sources, I shall attempt to show, every man possesses within himself. And lest any

¹ Butler in his “Analogy.”

² See Bishop Sumner’s Records of Creation, vol. i. p. 255.

one should suppose, that this may afford some ground for the notion of a purely Natural Religion, I shall be very explicit, in stating the exact nature and effect of the argument about to be pursued.

We have already availed ourselves of the doctrine of Causation, as laid down in Propositions I. and II., and have thereby arrived at the certainty, that there must be some intelligent Cause or Causes, for all things. From which conclusion (which is, at present, the whole amount of our Natural Theology) we arrive at no certain knowledge of the Character, or Moral Attributes of God ; nor even of his Personality, or Unity ; nor do we thereby receive any conviction of the necessity or rationality of Religious obligation, or Worship ; nor can we thence obtain, at the best, more than a probability of a Revelation. But we are about to pursue another argument, founded on the facts of "fitness" referred to in Proposition III. (which even Mr. Hume did not deny) ; which will conduct us farther than we have yet proceeded ; but yet will *not* lead us to a Natural Religion. My design is, to examine some principal facts of the human mind, in order to mark their real character, and discover whether there be any general Tendency, *i. e.*, any Final Cause, of human Beings, as such. The utmost effect of such an Examination, I anticipate to be this :—It will evince a probability of a Revelation, not only much higher than any which we have yet seen, but so high as to amount to a kind of *moral necessity* of a Revelation ; and, if I mistake not, just *such* a Revelation as the Christian. And this I believe to be the best precursor of Revelation. To

show to Man his absolute *want* of it. To prove that his whole being and constitution is *adapted* to religion :—which religion, since it cannot (as we have before seen) be deduced from purely Natural principles, *must* be Revealed.

I shall attempt therefore to establish the following Positions :—

First,—There are plain indications in the very constitution of Man (which may be gathered from the facts of individual Experience and the History of men in all Ages) that, as man is greatly dependent on superhuman power, so there exists a Class of relations, between him and that Superior Power; (wholly distinct from those of mere Morality); whereon is justly founded the belief, that *some* Religion is positively necessary, for a being so constituted as Man.

Second,—It will appear, from a still further examination of the mental and moral constitution and history of Man, that a Religion suitable to him must necessarily be such as the Christian, and no other.

Now reserving this latter Proposition for the next section of our discourse, we have first to consider what reason there is to conclude, that Man is made for religion, in the same sense as he is made for society. So that as it may be proved by facts that it is not “good (or fitting) that man should be alone”—it may also, in the very same way, be proved, that it is wholly unsuited to man’s constitution, that it is “not good” or fitting, for him to be without Religion.

It is not necessary to begin with verbal definitions

of what the essential constituents of the Human Mind may be. Strict definition is rather the result, than the origin, of accurate knowledge. If many facts of Physical Nature may be known, and relied on, as facts, without any real knowledge of the essence of any sensible natural objects ; so may many facts of the human mind be enumerated, without any definite knowledge of the constitution of the Mind itself. But I cannot, in justice to my argument, wholly abstain from noticing the opinions of some modern writers, relative to what have been called " Innate Ideas"—and " First principles of the human mind."

Not that it is my intention to enter on a prolonged exposition, or defence of the Platonic Doctrine ; nor is it at all necessary. The ridicule with which it was once assailed has given place of late to a more modest treatment ; and it cannot admit of doubt, that so much of truth as that Doctrine contains, will eventually be established in mental philosophy, in spite of the efforts of a dogmatic Materialism. The greatest opponent of the Doctrine, in modern times, Locke, may, indeed, be triumphantly quoted, as giving the best evidence in its favour. For he is obliged to have resort to a source of ideas, occasionally, quite distinct from those which he had declared to be the only two sources, viz.: Sensation and Reflection. In proof of which, I need only refer to that part of his essay, " concerning our knowledge of God.." ¹ It will appear, that what he there admits, under the name of " intuitive certainty," differs but little, in a practical respect, from the notion of Innate Ideas,

¹ Book iv., ch. 10., sec. 3.

But the consequences of Locke's hypothesis were more steadily followed out by Hume and others, than by Locke himself; and in consequence, very few, except professed Sceptics, may hereafter be expected to defend it.

It is a very common practice, to represent Hume's opinions as an exaggeration of Berkeley's Philosophy; but this is so far from the truth, that Hume's Scepticism is rather a legitimate inference from Mr. Locke's hypothesis; and may be traced to a rejection of Berkeley's distinguishing tenet—the Efficient Power of MIND, as the only real Cause of all the Phenomena of Nature. Thus Mr. Hume affirms, that “as the ideas of internal sentiment, added to those “of external sense comprise the whole furniture of “human understanding;” [by which word he means the whole mind], “we may conclude, that *none* of the “materials of thought are, in *any* respect similar in “the Human and the Divine Intelligence.”¹ So that, by following out Locke's principles, Hume demonstrated that “right and wrong—virtue and vice”—were mere fictions of the human mind, which might in nowise resemble the moral ideas of the Divine Mind! So that what *we* think Virtue, God may regard as Vice! The irreligious, and indeed blasphemous tendency of Locke's system of sensualism, having been thus faithfully shown, by the too consecutive reasoning of his followers, the system itself has, perhaps, more rapidly declined in reputation, than if it had been only attacked by its enemies, and formally disproved. The inadequacy of Locke's

¹ Hume's Dialogues on Natural Religion, p. 46.

"only two sources of our ideas," seems, indeed, to be now almost universally acknowledged. Professor Sedgwick, in a Philosophic discourse on the Studies of the University of Cambridge, has eloquently pointed out the deficiencies of Locke's system; and he hesitates not to admit, what he calls "innate feelings," and "innate capacities," in the Mind of Man. Dr. Campbell, in his Philosophy of Rhetoric, long since declared, that by means of the "discursive faculty." (*i. e.* by either sense or reflection), "we could never obtain a notion of the Beautiful and the Good. And, certainly, whoever will rigidly adhere to Locke's hypothesis, must, with Mr. Hume, reject the words "Spirit," "Substance," "Power," "Cause," and many others, as unmeaning terms; for, merely by means of our senses, we could never arrive at any idea of these things.

Locke's Doctrine is built upon what is called the Aristotelian theory—That "nothing is *conceived* which is not previously *perceived*." "Nihil in intellectu, quod non prius in sensu;" whereto, Leibnitz added, "*preter Intellectum ipsum*." And without this addition, it is, as Coleridge has remarked, only "half a Truth;" and I greatly doubt whether the sentence itself is to be found in any of the writings of Aristotle. It seems indeed to imply that Intellect itself is Nothing at all; that it is something much inferior to a mere "*tabula rasa*"—that it is something less than a shadow; in fact, a non-entity, prior to the introduction of sensible knowledge! Now, it is useless to mystify and pervert the

¹ and ²—See Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, p. 217.

doctrine of innate ideas, just to get rid of it. The question seems to resolve itself into this:—Are there, or are there not, certain immutable relations of being, which are inseparable, even in imagination, much less in reality, from Mind itself? The affirmative is the belief of the Assertors of innate ideas; and those who deny them, must affirm, that Mind is Nothing at all, *previous* to sensible knowledge. So that all knowledge is communicated to that which has no existence! This then is the strange creed of those who reject the doctrine of innate ideas: Either, That every object in the Universe has nothing for its subject; or, that Mind originally exists without ideas; *i. e.* Intellect exists apart from Intelligence—Thinking Beings, without thought!

But I am unwilling to risk the reception of the important truths for which I am about to contend, by representing them, as in any degree dependent on, what may be thought, uncertain speculations. I leave the foregoing remarks for those who may be willing to receive them; hoping that with some minds, they may not be without their utility. In attempting to prove, that Man, by the very constitution of his Being, is adapted to Religion, I will rely on nothing doubtful, nothing at all metaphysical, or disputable.

These points will, I think, be allowed to be quite certain;—That Thinking Beings do exist: That man is of the class of Thinking Beings: and, That such Beings, however simple their essence, have a constitution, or essential character, of some kind or other. What that constitution is, may be a point on which

it is impossible for us, certainly, to decide. We can only know it, so far as it is indicated by action. So that Human Actions, whether known from Individual Experience, or from Universal History, are the positive phenomena, from which our only knowledge of Human Beings is derived. And, when any class of Human Actions may be seen to be of a universal kind, (and not confined to particular men, or classes, or to men in a savage state, which is unnatural, but extended to those men who are in the state of highest civilization, which is suited to them)—we may fairly argue from such actions to the Mind from which they must result.

Now, from the knowledge which may, in this manner, be obtained of the character of the human mind—I am about to argue, that man was plainly made for Religion.

Such an Argument will, doubtless, require great caution, lest such actions as are the result of an idiosyncrasy, or singular temperament of individuals be mistaken for the actions of human beings, as such. But no danger can be apprehended, under this head, if it be borne in mind, that the characteristic acts of individuals have a peculiarity about them, which finds no universal correspondence among their fellow-men. While, on the other hand, it is equally true, that there are many cases in which human minds are *alike*, *i. e.*, have one constitution; so that “as in water face answereth to face, so answers the heart (and mind) of man to man.” In all which cases it would be absurd to attribute such actions merely to certain individuals; for we see

that they are attributable to *all* men, of every age, clime, nation, and condition; and this would be assigning a partial and local cause, for a universal effect. Thus, then, by carefully examining some "facts of the Human Mind," I hope to establish—a plain statement of its "final cause," its natural "tendency," as the only possible pre-requisite to Religion; in the place of the spurious Naturalism which has been before disproved. And such an Argument to "Final Causes" is felt, and practically understood, by all men, although the generality might not comprehend an abstract statement of it.

(1.) First of all, I would adduce a fact which meets us at the very outset of our inquiry, which has been often noticed by different writers, but which is practically disregarded, or lightly esteemed. I mean this:—That however greatly Religions differ among men, *some* kind of Religion seems to be universally acknowledged. I say universally, because those two or three tribes of savages which were instanced, by some French writers, as exceptions to this universal fact, cannot influence our decision in the least degree. Indeed they demonstrate, if true, how deeply degraded Man must be—almost (to use the expression of Coleridge) "hunted out of his humanity," before he could lose the Religious instincts of his Being. But, indeed, even these exceptions seem to be now surrendered. The accounts of those French travellers concerning uncouth tribes of men, who had no notions of any sort of Religion, have been seen to be mere fabrications. So that what was admitted in Dr. Balguy's time, as a fact, appears to be a fiction

of the boldest kind, ventured on for the support of an Atheistic hypothesis ; in consequence of the apparent difficulty of disproving it. For, it may now be safely declared, that no section of the human race has yet been met with (whose language we have sufficient knowledge of to enable us to ascertain their opinions) who are so nearly outlawed from Humanity, so nearly degenerated into wild beasts, as to be wholly Religionless. Here then is a Fact ;—The Universal Prevalence of some Religion.

Now it is no explanation of this fact to call all Religion “Superstition,” and then say, that “The vulgar in all ages are prone to Superstition.” For the Superstition of which I speak, is by no means confined to “the vulgar.” In addition to which consideration, it must be remembered, that this free condemnation of Religion, as “Superstition,” is a plain *petitio principii*. If a belief in the Supreme Being, or in a future life, be Superstition, then Superstition, instead of being confined to the vulgar, is shared by Socrates and Plato—by Bacon, Newton, and Berkeley—in a word, by the good and the great of every age. And I am so far from being frightened, by this bugbear of the “Freethinkers,”¹ that if it could be shown, that any “Superstition” was universally prevalent among all men, whether wise or unwise, and seemed after 6000 years’ experience to be ineradicable from their constitution—I should be apt to conclude, that such superstition was TRUTH.

And further, it is useless to oppose to this fact, a simple denial of all first principles—or “innate

¹ *Etym.*—Perhaps another instance of “*lucus a non lucendo*!”

ideas" in human minds. For we have previously excluded all such metaphysical niceties from this discussion, and are treating only of a question of fact. And therefore, I request any who may be disposed to doubt the ground on which we are proceeding—once more to consider attentively our Postulate in p. 46. The inveterate propensity of man to some Religion—(which consists in the belief of certain Relations existing between Man and some Superior Power—which is more than mere morality)—is a "fact of the Human Mind" which no sophistry can explain away. It is a fact as universal as the belief in Efficient Causation—or Spontaneous Agency—whereon depend all the conclusions of human science—all the actions of human life. In proof of the fact, I appeal to individual Experience, and to Universal History. And I draw from it no far-fetched inference. My conclusion is implied in the simplest statement of the fact itself. There is in man a Tendency to Religion. Whatever be the constitution or essence of the human mind—Religion is its "Final Cause."

(2.) The second "Fact" which I shall here adduce shall be a very simple one; of which all men, however scanty their knowledge in other respects, may be, to a great extent, good judges, if they merely consult their own hearts and consciences. It is this:—There is in Man a principle of Gratitude for favors received. This fact I consider to be as undeniable as the former; or as any which could be brought forward. All experience bears witness, that there are feelings of Gratitude in human hearts, which are elicited by

suffering, on the one hand, and by benevolent sympathy on the other. Indeed, the baseness of no crime is so universally acknowledged and detested as Ingratitude; and it has even been observed, that this is, perhaps, the only crime of which no man would ever acknowledge himself guilty. It might, therefore, seem superfluous to enter into any formal proof of the existence of this principle of Gratitude in Man. We are surrounded with a "cloud of witnesses." The child who clings closely to his mother, grateful for her protection and her love, bears as strong a testimony, in this cause, as the poorest and most dependent of our race, who drag on their pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave, receiving the bounty of the rich, or the patronage of the stranger.

Nor can it be said that the feeling of Gratitude is a merely moral, and not a religious, feeling. A very little consideration will convince us, that this feeling is by no means confined to those moral relations which subsist between man and man. When unearned (and perhaps undeserved) benefits are received by us, and from no human hand; when, for instance, a rescue from misery, or ruin, arises from some hidden cause, to which men ignorantly assign the name of Chance—will the heart of man be in nowise affected? Will not such un-hoped-for deliverance cause a feeling of deepest gratitude to spring up within him?—and to WHOM?—I judge from myself, and from those human beings with whom I have been able to acquaint myself, and I firmly believe, that at such times, the human heart

“leaps up” (to adopt an expression of Wordsworth’s) with thankfulness and joy, to some superior Power and Benevolence, who has thus overruled events for our good !

Nor can I persuade myself that these instincts of our nature are deceitful and untrue. I rather conclude that the “fact” that man *is* thus constituted, is an irrefragable proof that he has naturally a *tendency* to religion of some kind, *i. e.*, a relation or connection with, and dependence on, a Superior Power.

(3.) If further proof were required of the natural tendency of the Human Mind, I would point to another fact—the readiness with which even bad arguments are admitted, for the first truths of Religion. Concerning which I may refer back to the whole of the second part of this Dissertation, and especially page 129. A kind of instinctive reference (I hope I may be pardoned for using a word which, though somewhat inaccurate, expresses my meaning more nearly than any other that I can think of), an instinctive reference from Creation to the Creator, from Nature to God, is universal among men. This species of indistinct Religious Sense requires, doubtless, to be cultivated ; but, on the other hand, it can never be quite eradicated, without making man a brute. Nothing is more suitable to the human mind, than to believe in the existence of a power and goodness (above all earthly power and goodness), the tokens whereof are before the eyes, and within the heart, of every man. This reference from nature, to some Power above nature, is perfectly sound and correct. That such a reference is

inevitably made by us, is one of the facts of the human mind. The error of the Natural Theologians lies, not in admitting this fact, but in exaggerating it into a formal Syllogism ; or speaking of it as an “ Argument from Design ;” which is absurd.

(4.) I might occupy much space with observations on many other “facts of the human mind” which would justify the same conclusion as the foregoing. Much, for instance, might be urged on the facts—That the constitution of the mind of man is such, that it cannot help marking the moral inequalities of this world : and the consequent necessity of another state of being where “ these odds must be made even :”—That our constitution is such, that we are startled by the depression of Virtue, and the exaltation of Vice ; and admire the heroism which calmly waits for its future reward. These, and similar facts, might well be dwelt on ; but I fear to seem tedious in elaborating a point which most men may readily admit. But there is one more fact which I cannot forbear noticing, for it has in itself a weight which might bear down all objections, even if it stood unsupported and alone.

Have we not an inward sense of the very nothingness of this life?—In spite of the deadening pressure of this world’s business, have we not often-times an aspiration after a better world?—or, at least, an impression that we were called into being for something *more* than all this earthly scene? Who has not in his heart subscribed the feeling declaration of the Apostle, “ It doth not yet appear what we shall be ?” If there be any thriving

“earthworm,” to whom these words convey no meaning, let us not call him a man! Here, if in no other point, I feel conscious that I shall have the suffrage of all men capable of feeling, understanding, and reflecting. In this particular I am sure that the “heart of man to man” is as the reflected face in a glass. Who has not felt, that this is not the chief, or only, end of being; — to breathe — to eat — drink — sleep — to-day, to-morrow, the same — and onward, for a few short years, till at length we lie down, and die; giving place to others, who are to do the same, in a useless, continuous, course for ever? Oh! who has not exclaimed — “Is this *all*?” Surely the fullest abundance of the things of this world will never satisfy the cravings of the human mind! Such is the very constitution of Man, that to him all things here are unsatisfying. And what is this but an inherent “tendency” in man to a better life than this present? This inclination, longing, or proclivity, is an undeniable *fact*; and if our nature speak the truth we *cannot* perish here!

I appeal not alone to the wretched or the discontented—but even to those who are blessed with all that can make this life desirable. I would appeal to any man who *thinks* seriously on the matter; even to him who, in addition to the outward blessings of liberty and plenty, has the higher and purer joys of a “conscience void of offence,” a heart of charity, and a home of love—and I doubt not, that in his hours of quiet meditation, he will, at times, be possessed with a deep consciousness of the nothingness of the world—will feel an inde-

scribable void—a WANT of something *more* than all this—something loftier, nobler, and more enduring! This fact, if it stood alone, this upward tendency of the mind, would suffice to prove that man, by his very constitution, is adapted to some Religion; in other words, that “Religion is the ‘Final Cause’ of the human mind.”

Now this conclusion cannot be reasonably rejected by any one who admits our Postulate, (p. 46.) And, if this conclusion be adopted, the only plea which can be plausibly brought forward for the fictitious science of Natural Theology, (viz., that it is introductory to Revelation) is at once taken away. If any precursor be necessary to Revelation, the tendency and predisposition of the human mind must be owned to be a more true and more effectual (because more universal) precursor than any other. It is easy to raise objections to what has been here advanced; but it surely is unreasonable to be reluctant in admitting whatever is clearly proved; if, therefore, our first position (p. 166) be now established, on a basis of “fact,” it cannot be overthrown by a sneer or a prejudice.

“The fear of Superstition doth exclude
Half of the truth from th’ earth;—the multitude,
Once prone to every marvel, now affect
To grow most philosophic, and reject
Whate’er they handle not, nor taste, nor see!—
I envy not their vain Philosophy!
I deem such wisdom of but little worth!
—Our nature speaks the truth!—our inmost soul
Has sympathies, which sorrow will bring forth,
With the deep mysteries that throng the whole
Of wide Creation — new-felt sympathies—

Hid and unknown before—which are as ties,
And links, to th' Universe—Earth—Air—and Skies !

Mystery, if all untrue, man's heart rejects ;
But gives response to Truth, tho' darkly seen ;
Hence Superstition's power, which ne'er had been
So dominant, nor wrought such strong effects
On all men—reverend age and vigorous youth—
Were it not strangely mighty, to create
A phantom-lie, so like some mystic truth,
That human hearts bow down and venerate !—
Our human hearts have sense that there is much
In Nature that we know not—that we touch
The confines of th' invisible, and unknown !——”

* * * * *

SECTION II.

OF REVELATION.

I SHOULD content myself with merely deriving my remaining conclusions, as unavoidable inferences, from what has been thus far proved ; but for the fact, that moral conviction does not always follow, from the formal establishment of any point, however important. I would, therefore, wish to add some strong collateral reasons, which may have a moral weight of their own ; nor would I avoid the consideration of any fair objections to the principles thus far advocated.

If it be admitted, that no single truth of Theology can be arrived at by the sole force of natural reasoning, (see p. 160) and yet, that man, by his very mental and moral constitution, is plainly adapted to some Religion, (see p. 166) I see not what is to prevent a conclusion in favour of a REVELATION of some kind ; unless we can make up our minds to believe, that our Religion ought to be a system of guess-work, constructed by Imagination, after the failure of the efforts of Reason. I conceive, therefore, that, excepting those who may be ready to defend this paradoxical notion, all men will be inclined to admit the necessity of some Revelation ;

for, as Dr. Paley has well observed, few men will be found who imagine, that, even with all the advantages of¹ Christianity, we have too much light, in Religious matters. Whatever theoretical difficulties, or objections, may lie against the notion of a Revelation, I would simply ask—whether the necessity of a Revelation, of some kind, has not been clearly established?—and, if so,—whether objections of this class be any better than mere dialectic amusement?

The phrase “Revealed Religion” is, as Coleridge remarked, a pleonasm:² for all Religion must be revealed, or it is nothing but bare hypothesis. But there are those who object “That the Christian Revelation itself acknowledges the existence of a Natural Religion;” and, if this objection can be made good, our present conclusions will be, of course, destroyed. But I shall endeavour to show that this widely-prevalent notion arises from the ambiguity of the phrase³ “Natural Religion;” and the misinterpretation of texts resulting therefrom.

I have, more than once, explained, that the “natural Religion,” against which our argument has been directed, is a system which the philosophic Deist affects to deduce from premises. That indissoluble connexion which the mind of man almost

¹ It seems hardly necessary to prove in this place the superiority of Christianity over all other professed Revelations.

² This volume had nearly passed through the press before I had met with “Ellis’s knowledge of Divine things from Revelation,” to which book I refer my readers.

³ See page 33.

instinctively perceives between natural glory and supernatural power, is no logical deduction from premises:—it is no “argument from design.” While I maintain, then, that the Scriptures alone declare the UNITY of God, I own, that “The heavens declare his glory:”—and as man’s eye perceives the light of heaven before he can reason about it, so does man’s mind perceive, long before he begins to reason about, the glory of that power which “spreads forth the heavens as a curtain.” Nor let it be said, that the distinction which I argue for, is a merely verbal, or a useless distinction. For by shewing the Deist, that his Naturalism is not a deduction of strict reasoning, we compel him either to own, that he sketches out a Religion according to his own fancy, and then presses reason into the support of it;—or, to confess, that it is unreasonable to reject the assistance of that Revelation which *alone* will furnish him with that Religion which his very constitution is adapted to, and stands in need of.

The strongest text which the advocates of Naturalism have been able to bring forward, is in the 1st Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans :¹ But I hope to prove that that text, instead of supporting, directly opposes their system. I shall attempt to shew that St. Paul is arguing *to* Final Causes rather than *from* them: that, so far from assuming that a

¹ “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

belief in a Deity is strictly deducible from natural premises, he makes direct reference, both here and elsewhere, to *other* sources, from which this theological knowledge was derived.

In the 19th verse of this Chapter St. Paul maintains that the "wrath of God" was due towards the heathen world, and for these two reasons; 1st., "Because that which may be known of God is manifest *in them*;" and 2ndly, "God hath *shewed it* (*ἐφανερώσε*) to them." And after making this reference both to the "constitution of human nature" (representing Religion as its "Final Cause") and to a "prior revelation," on God's part; he adds—"For the invisible things of HIM, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being *understood* by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. *Because*, that when *they knew God* (*"γινώσκτες τον Θεον"*) they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful: &c." And again, in the 28th verse, he makes mention of their having had a *previous knowledge* of God, which they had lost, "They did not like to *retain* God in their knowledge." Again, in the next chapter, he makes another allusion to the "constitution of human nature" speaking of the law written in the "consciences" of Men.

But further—As a firm believer in the Jewish Scriptures, the Apostle could not have been unacquainted with the fact, that all men were descended from common parents, to whom God had personally revealed himself; and that, at the flood, a Revelation was also made to Noah, the ancestor of the whole

post-diluvian world. Now, the Apostle's acquaintance with this fact is wholly inconsistent with the notion that he admitted of a Theology actually deduced (even if logically deducible) from natural premises. The Apostle admitted the *fact*, that our common forefather had a revealed knowledge of God: and, indeed, I never heard of any one who imagined that Mankind were ever totally destitute of the knowledge of a Deity—*i. e.* had ever completely obliterated all traces of the Primitive Faith, and *then* reasoned themselves into a rational "Natural Theology!" The *facts* of all human history are conclusive against the hypothesis, that a Natural Theology was ever deduced purely from Natural Principles. I conclude, therefore, that when St. Paul declares that the heathen world have enough "in them" (see p. 177) and that God "hath shewed" enough unto them, to render them inexcusable, he is so far from sanctioning any such theory as the Natural Theologians maintain, that his express words, as well as his known opinions, and character, are against it. That kind of Gentile Religion, to which he alludes, is no deduction from premises; he makes an induction of the facts, of the moral "conscience," and the "constitution of the Human Mind"—and, above all, "Primitive Tradition"¹—and justly argues therefrom, that Man's fearful departure from God was "inexcusable."

And now, passing from the consideration of this

¹ See Note D.

objection, which is a parenthesis in our Argument, let us briefly notice,

The second Position.—That a Religion suitable to man must necessarily be such as the Christian ; and no other (p. 166).

This might be made evident by pursuing either a synthetical or an analytical mode of argument. That is, we might make an induction of the chief truths of Christianity, and shew their suitability and adaptation to the wants and constitution of Man : Or, we might enumerate some of the principal peculiarities of the human constitution, and shew therefrom, that man stands in positive need of just such Religious Truths as the principal doctrines of Christianity. The latter method is perhaps to be preferred, as it is a more plain and immediate Argument to Final Causes ; and is of the same kind as that pursued in the last Section. I shall therefore attempt, briefly, to make use of it ; though I may not wholly neglect the other method.

It cannot be denied that human laws, customs, and habits, are, to a great extent, the result of the Human Constitution ; consequently, we may infer, from the universal, or very general, prevalence of certain institutes and customs, that man is a being of such a nature, that such institutes are suitable and necessary to him. And we shall thus arrive at a more definite idea of Man's Religious Constitution, and be less liable to mistake, than if we relied on merely verbal definitions, and logical criticisms, which no two persons might exactly agree about.

Now, it is a singular and undeniable fact, that the Religious Institutes of all nations, bear some resemblance, more or less striking, to the institutes of Christianity.¹ The analogy is not so strong that we may infer, that either the Heathen or Christian Institutes were originated purely by the natural efforts of the mind of man; yet it is strong enough to warrant the conclusion, that the Institutes are, to a certain extent, consentaneous to the human constitution. And, that if Man is to have a Religion suitable to him, it must, in its main particulars, resemble Christianity. And when we further discover, that the well-being and perfection of man, up to the present time, have varied, in exact ratio, with his conformity to Christianity; and that the Institutes of other Religions are only suitable to Human Nature, and contribute to its well-being, in proportion as they are assimilated to the Christian Institutes; I think we have the strongest reason to conclude, that Christianity is *the* necessary Religion of Man.

Previous to the Christian era, we find, that a gradual corruption of religion had taken place, almost from the earliest ages; so much so, that the farther we go back, the purer and the simpler does the religion appear to have been. “*Quo propius aberat,*” says Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations*, “*ab ortu et Divina progenie, hoc melius ea fortasse quæ erant vera cernēbat.*” By thus tracing back the wide and languid stream, of Religious Tradition, to its sources among the rivers and fountains

¹ See Note D.

which watered a primeval paradise, (where man rejoiced in the presence of his Maker!—where “creatures of a day” held holiest communion with the Eternal!)—we shall find that the simplest and purest religious doctrines and practices are those which are most ancient, and most universal; and which Christianity more fully developes, elucidates, and enforces.

In the Book of Job, for instance, (more ancient perhaps, by some hundreds of years, than any book in the world,) we find no traces of an intricate theology, or an elaborate ceremonial. The belief in ONE GOD—the Creator, and Moral Governor of the World—The acknowledgment of the Moral CORRUPTION of Man.—The hope of a future Sanctifier, and REDEEMER;—These points seem to constitute the brief, though comprehensive, Creed of the Patriarchal Religion. And it was accompanied and transmitted, by the one significative rite of SACRIFICE. Now these three points—the belief in God—in Man’s present alienation from him—and in the future restoration to his favour—may be traced, though in a thousand distorted forms, in every Religion which has been known among men. But Christianity is the only Religion which receives these points *purely*, and without those peculiar crudities, and absurdities, which, more or less, distinguish every other system.

Now, these points must be owned to be, either revealed originally by God, or to be the natural offspring¹ [by no means the logical deductions] of the Human Mind; and our argument for their

¹ See page 176.

reception, as TRUTHS, is equally strong on either supposition. For if they be acknowledged to be revealed, their truth, of course, is at once settled ;— they *must* form part of our religion : and if they be thought to be the natural offspring of the mind of man, they cannot be excluded from any religion, which professes to be suitable to a being constituted as man is.

And the same mode of argument may be pursued with regard to the mysterious rite of Sacrifice. Whether the sense which Man naturally had of his inability to purify his own nature, and restore himself to God's favor, originated some vague notion of sacrifice—or whether (which I incline to think to be the truth)—the deficiency of moral purity, and of spiritual power, was made known by God to Man, and sacrifice was an instituted type and memorial of man's restoration by a Mighty Saviour and Purifier to be hereafter revealed ;—in either case, the fact is undeniable, that Sacrifice has been universal : that the notion seems suitable to the Human mind : and the argument is conclusive that a Religion suitable to Beings constituted as men are, must acknowledge some such truth.¹

In the profound work of Bishop Butler, on the “ Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the constitution and course of nature,” this argument is greatly illustrated : and the Sacrifice of Christ,

¹ The same conclusion may also be drawn even by those who admit either Warburton's or Taylor's Theory of Sacrifice. The fact is the same, how greatly soever the explanation may vary.

“offered once for all,” is defended in a way in which, I think, no person of competent understanding will fail to see force. And I cannot too strongly recommend the perusal of the whole chapter “on the Appointment of a Mediator and Redeemer.” This is, indeed, the distinctive doctrine of our Religion; Redemption effected by the Mediation of Christ; and I am convinced that whoever will think deeply about it, will find in it a peculiar suitability to the constitution of human nature. And, therefore, I do not dwell on the other characteristics (Moral and Spiritual) of the Christian System; as the doctrine of Mediation is its main feature. Indeed, if it were not so, I think that Christianity could not be received as a Religion suitable to man. For it is plain, that man by his very constitution requires some such doctrine as this; since every religion which has prevailed in the world acknowledges it, in some way.

But the suitability of the Doctrine of Christ’s Mediation,¹ to the constitution of man, is no theoretical truth. It may be decided by the powerful tests of fact and experience. After a trial of 1800 years, it surely cannot be difficult to decide, whether the Chief Doctrine of our Faith be suitable to men, or not. It is a practical, historic, question. What has been the *effect* of this Doctrine on those who have heartily received it?

Now, without entering into the question of the

¹ I use the term “Mediation” in a generic sense—including the whole work of Christ’s intervention on man’s behalf.

cause of this effect, I simply state the fact itself—That the cordial reception of this doctrine has been strikingly accompanied, in every age and country, by a renovation of the heart and mind of man. It invariably calls into life and action the best feelings, and holiest sympathies of the human soul. The effect thus wrought upon the whole human constitution is as extensive, as it is inexplicable ; and establishes most fully the point for which I have been contending. Wherever the doctrine of Reconciliation to God by Christ has been received—the Soul of Man has been thrilled as it were with a fresh vitality.—It has vibrated, like a newly-strung harp, whereon some heavenly harmony has been struck, by the hand of a master, which all can *feel*, but none can fully comprehend !

It would not be difficult still further to shew the suitability of Christianity to the constitution of Human Beings, by an induction of its other principal doctrines—Regeneration—Repentance—Faith, &c. For it surely admits of proof, that a Religion without such doctrines would not be a Religion suitable to the Constitution of Man ; and, therefore, on each point, a distinct argument might be raised. But the object of this Dissertation is perhaps to a great extent attained by the General Arguments now set forth. Whoever may wish further to pursue such Arguments as those to which I now allude, may find assistance in the Sermons of Bishop Butler and in Dr. Chalmer's Bridgewater Treatise.

I here conclude with that sublime summary which

St. John in the Apocalypse has given, (not simply of the doctrine of Causation—but of all Theology) which is—if I may so say—the key to the whole Argument of this Discourse ; “ Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α, καὶ τὸ Ω, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος ! ”—GOD himself is both the “ First Cause,” and the “ Final Cause,” of the whole Universe of Intelligent Being.

SECTION III.

OF TRUTHS OF REASON.

HAVING now concluded our General Argument by illustrating the position—That the Christian Religion is peculiarly adapted to the constitution and condition of Man; so that it may even be regarded as the “Final Cause” of the human mind; let us proceed, finally, to enquire—Whether the Chief Truths of Revelation must not be considered as Truths of the highest class—i. e., “eternal and necessary Truths of Reason?”¹ In this Enquiry, which is supplementary to, though not necessarily connected with, our whole Argument, it will be allowable to take what has been thus far proved, as established Truth, from which we may safely argue.

At the beginning of this Dissertation, I attempted to point out the distinction between “Truths of Reason,” and “Truths of Understanding,”² which distinction, though long since admitted in Germany, was not familiar to English Metaphysicians, until it was vindicated by Coleridge. “The Understanding,” (says Coleridge) “in all its Judgments, refers to “some *other* faculty—as its Ultimate Authority”—

¹ See page 42, where I classed together mathematical, moral, and religious Truths, as equally “eternal and necessary.”

² See pp. 41, 42 &c.—see also note E.

which figurative way of speaking may be thus translated : When the Mind of a Man has performed an Act of Judgment " according to sense," and when he has reflected on that Judgment, he compares it with a certain internal Standard by which he decides the right and the wrong—the true and the false—the just and the unjust. And that inward process is an act of pure REASON.

The subordinate character of an act of Understanding to an act of Reason, is plain, for instance, from the fact—that in Understanding anything we do not pronounce any Rational or Moral decision concerning it. " Reason," says Hooker, " is a *direct* aspect " of Truth; an inward beholding; having a similar " relation to the Intelligible or Spiritual, as sense has " to the Material, or Phenomenal."¹ From which it would appear, that Truths of Reason are (if I may so express it) of an *à priori*, and Truths of Understanding of an *à posteriori* character. We may hence see the absurdity of expecting any " Arguments" (strictly so called) to establish a Truth of Reason. For Argument is a process of Understanding, and can only conduct us to Truths of Understanding, which are within the province of Sense and Experience. We have seen that no Arguments, yet adduced, have been able to establish the First Truths of Theology; but this can be accounted for, at once, if it be admitted, that they are not Truths of Understanding. It is, indeed, exactly what might have been expected. If they could be brought to the Test of Sense or Experience,

¹ Quoted in the *Aids to Reflection*, p. 214.

they might doubtless be capable of proof by Argument; but in this case there would surely be no need of a Revelation to make them known. I, therefore, cannot but consider the very phrase, for instance—"Argument for the being of God"—(so far as it is intelligible)—to be a kind of blasphemy; it degrades the Truth of the Divine Existence, by supposing that it may be discerned, and judged of, and argued about, as a Truth of Understanding. To suppose the possibility of "An Argument for the being of God," is to suppose Infinite Perfection to be reducible to the finite forms of sense.

But further: All that has been brought forward in the foregoing Arguments to shew the want of a REVELATION, may be considered as proving the subject matter of Revelation (viz. Religious Truths)—to belong to the class of Truths not discoverable by the Human Understanding. There could be no need of a Revelation to make known "Truths of Sense." Revealed Truths must, therefore, necessarily be Truths of a higher class. The Truths of Sense, or Understanding, are inseparable from the forms of space and time. The higher Truths (i. e. Truths of Reason) are not so—and are therefore esteemed "necessary and eternal." Since therefore Revealed Truths must be superior to "Truths of Sense," they are "necessary and eternal."

And, indeed, the very nature of the Revealed Truths will shew us, that if Truths at all they must be immutable "Truths of Reason." If there be a God—can we without irrational profanity deny that

the truth of his being is an Eternal and Necessary Truth?

The fundamental doctrines of our Religion are contained in this statement—"There is one God; and one Mediator between God and man—the Man, Christ Jesus." If these propositions be true at all, their Truth cannot be limited by those modes of conception which may be peculiar to finite Intelligences. And if they are not so limited, they cannot be considered as Truths of Understanding, but must even be regarded as unchangeable Truths of Reason.

It may be objected—that if Religious Truths were Truths of Reason, there would not be such diversity of opinion concerning them; for *à priori* Truth would commend itself at once to every mind, and the denial of it would involve a plain contradiction.—But this objection *assumes* the very point in dispute. It assumes, that the human mind is capable of perceiving *all* Truths of Reason by Intuition, and does not stand in any need of Revelation. And until this assumption be proved, the objection, founded upon it, cannot be considered valid.

And further:—It is very possible, that it may be the exclusive prerogative of a higher order of Intellect than Man's to perceive the *à priori* necessity of certain Revealed Truths of Reason—which, to us, may be matters of faith. I say, it is very *possible*, (and this possibility is sufficient to obviate the force of the objection, as such), that a higher order of Intelligence than ours (which may see farther into the arcana of Moral and Intellectual being than we

can) may fully perceive, for instance, the Revealed Doctrine of Atonement,¹ to be a Necessary and Eternal Truth of Reason—just as plainly as the Mind of Man perceives the immutable necessity of the Truth, $2+2=4$.

Let it be observed, that those Truths of Reason which the Mind of Man intuitively perceives, refer rather to the possible Relations of Being, than to Being itself. I think it will not be denied, that the possible Relations of Being are, in modo concipiendi, prior to, and independent of, Being itself—(see p. 170.)—Now, Religious and Moral Truths may be defined as the possible and actual Relations of Religious and Moral Being; therefore, their priority and independency cannot be consistently denied.² And this admission of the Anteriority of Religious Truth, to all Sensible Truth, is exactly equivalent to our first assertion.—That the Truths of Religion are not Truths of Understanding, but of

¹ Ep. Hebrews ix. 22, *χωρις αιματος χυσιος ε γινεται αφεσις.*

² This may be in some degree illustrated and confirmed by the following sentences of Dr. Chalmers's Bridgwater Treatise (chap. L, on the Supremacy of Conscience.) "The virtuousness of justice
"was a stable doctrine in Ethical Science anterior to the existence
"of the Species; and would remain so, though the Species were
"destroyed—just as much as the properties of a triangle are the
"enduring stabilities of Mathematical science; and that though no
"matter had been created to exemplify the positions or the figures
"of Geometry."—"Virtue is not the creation of the Divine
"Will, but has had everlasting residence in the nature of the God-
"head."—See pp. 58 and 59, Vol. I. The truth of these positions depends on this statement.—That the possible Relations of Being must be conceived of as prior to being itself; "in modo concipiendi.")

Reason ; and consequently cannot be arrived at by Argument, but must be known by Revelation, unless they are perceived intuitively.

In conformity with this conclusion are the words of the great Apostle.¹ “ The Natural Man (i.e. Man’s “ Natural Understanding) receiveth not the things “ of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness “ unto him ; neither *can* he know them ; because they “ are spiritually discerned :” Which spiritual discerning can only result from the elevation and spiritualizing of the Mind of Man. This we are distinctly informed in the Christian Revelation ; and it is indeed a plain deduction from the premises. For since all truths of Reason are “ spiritually discerned”—those Truths of Reason which are not intuitively perceived, but are revealed, will not be rightly apprehended, unless the Mind of Man be prepared to receive them ; i. e. unless it be brought up to the level of the Truths placed before it. And this, if the expression be allowable, may be considered as the rationale of the whole Christian doctrine of Regeneration and Renovation of Character ; which is declared to be essential for acceptance with God, and for a right reception of his Revealed Truth. From which it may be seen that a Revelation of Eternal Truth, without a corresponding regeneration or renewing of the Mind of Man, to render it capable of rightly receiving it, would not accomplish any important end.

It will now be evident in what sense, and on what

¹ Ep. I. Corinthians, ii. 14.

grounds, I assert the Truths of Revelation to be necessary Truths of Reason "Spiritually discerned, i. e. not cognizable by Sense." A fuller defence of this statement might perhaps be considered by some to be out of place in this Dissertation; and its own importance might well demand a distinct Treatise upon it. The defence of this position would perhaps be little more than a development of the principle already laid down—That "the possible Relations of Being are to be conceived of as prior to Being itself."

It might throw light on this subject to compare the sentiments of Plato concerning "Eternal forms," and "Universals," with those of Berkeley, Cudworth, Kant, and Coleridge among the moderns, concerning those Truths which the Mind directly perceives as necessary and immutable Truths of Reason. The doctrine of Plato, as laid down both in the *Timæus* and the *Parmenides*, corresponds to a great extent, if not altogether, with what has been now maintained concerning the "possible Relations of Being," whether sensible or intelligent.

An able commentator on Aristotle, in illustrating the sixth chapter of the first book of the *Ethics*, writes thus:—"Neque semper verum est 'Aristidis justitiam esse virtutem,' non enim semper est Aristides: at semper verum, 'Justitiam esse Virtutem.' Hoc intuens, Plato statuit τα καθολα sola proprie "esse," atque idcirco esse πρώτας ἐσίας καὶ μάλιστα ἐσίας, &c." And this exactly accords with what was premised in the Exordium of this Discourse, and what has been since stated concerning Truths of

Reason. Those philosophers, indeed, who, from Protagoras downwards, have most strongly denied the existence of Eternal and Immutable Truths, and have constructed their Ethical and Religious Systems on the principle, that all truths are relative, and that our notions of right and wrong, just and unjust, &c., are derived from positive institution, have not always been able even to complete their systems, without tacitly assuming that which they denied. Thus there is a contradiction, unless I greatly err, between Aristotle's professed rejection of Immutable Truth, and the spirit and tone of the whole of his matchless Treatise of Morals. He plainly *assumes* the existence and Truth of a Moral Constitution in Man; and all his conclusions depend on the reality and certainty of his premises; but surely that reality and certainty cannot be admitted without giving up the notion that Moral Truth is a merely conventional thing—or that the whole Moral Constitution of Man is the pure result of habit. And yet in the opening of his work, Aristotle affirms—"τα δε καλα και τα δικαια περι 'ων η πολιτικη σκεπεται τοσαυτην εχει διαφοραν και πλανην ως δοκειν νομιμον ειναι, φυσει δε μη." And further on, he attacks the doctrine of Plato concerning "Universals."¹ But I have exceeded, I fear, the proper limits of this discussion, and here come to a close in the words of Dr. Cudworth:²—

"If the noetical perceptions of the Soul were only phantastical and did not extend to the comprehension of the absolute Truth of things, then every opi-

¹ See also the fifth book, especially on Political Justice.

² See Cudworth's *Eternal and Immutable Morality* p. 268.

nion would of necessity be alike true, neither could there be any absolute falsehood in any, because every fancy is true,¹ i. e. every fancy is a fancy, or an appearance, and nothing more is required to it; for absolute Truth belongs not to the nature of it. But it is evident to all who are not sunk and degenerated below men into brutish sottishness that there are false opinions; whence it follows undeniably that the Noetical Knowing and Intellective Power extends to the Absolute Truth of things. So that whatever Theoretical Universal Proposition in Geometry or Metaphysics is true to one Mind—the same is absolutely true in itself, and therefore true to all minds whatsoever throughout the whole world, that clearly understand it.²

“Wherefore, though the immediate objects of knowledge which are the Intelligible Essences of things, and their Relations to one another, or Verities, exist no where but in minds, yet notwithstanding they are not figments of the mind; because then every opinion or cogitation would be alike true; i. e. a true figment, having no other truth but relative to that particular mind whose figment it is; but these things have an absolute and immutable nature in themselves, and their mutual respects to one another are alike immutable. And, therefore, those opinions and cogitations of the mind which are not conformable to the immutable Reality of those objective

¹ *πασα φαντασια ἐστὶν ἀληθής.*

² The readers of Cudworth should bear in mind that the words “Understand” and “Understanding” are used by him in the same sense as Coleridge and others (whom we have followed) use Reason and Reasoning.

ideas, have an absolute falsehood in them. As for example, the nature of a triangle, is an immutable thing, and this is demonstrable of it, as immutably and necessarily true, that it hath three angles equal to two right ones; neither can any man's opinion or thinking make it otherwise: for it is a false opinion unless it be agreeable to the immutable nature of a triangle. So likewise the plain regular Geometrical Solids, as such, have an immutable Nature or Essence: and it is demonstrable of them that there are five such bodies, and that there can be no more: And any opinion to the contrary will be an absolute falsehood. Wherefore, every opinion, or thinking, is not knowledge; but only a right opinion: and therefore knowledge is not relative *πρὸς τὸ κρίνον*, as Sense is. TRUTH is the most unbending and uncompliant, the most necessary, firm, immutable, and adamantine thing in the world."

THE END.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

Note A. p. 22.

AFTER the various reviews which have appeared, of Lord Brougham's Discourse of Natural Theology, it may seem superfluous again to call special attention to it, by this Note. But no review which I have seen has exposed the *Anti-Christian* tendency of that volume; and I am not without hope that these remarks may call forth, from some able pen, such an exposure.

Judging from the "Evidences of the Design" of Lord Brougham's book, I should conclude, that it was intended to show, that a REVELATION was superfluous. I cannot be diverted from this conclusion, by the occasional allusions which he makes to the Christian Religion. They rather tend to strengthen my belief in the Infidel tendency of his Lordship's Discourse; for even his most distant allusions to Christianity and its defenders generally, convey a sneer, a doubt, or a censure. If there be such an art as what Pope called "damning with faint praise," Lord Brougham must be admitted to be a complete master of it; as well as of a cognate art of 'praising by faint censure.' When, in "The Discourse," a reference is made to any of the great Champions of our Faith, it is almost invariably in disparaging terms. When, on the contrary, such writers as Hume and Voltaire are alluded to, their faults are extenuated and their literary merits greatly exaggerated (see p. 233, &c.).

I cannot think, for example, that it is a mere love of accurate expression which makes Lord Brougham (p. 6), upbraid Bishop Butler with incorrectness for using the words "Theology" and "Religion," as synonymous; because I find that his Lordship is himself guilty of this very inaccuracy in p. 205 of his discourse;—when he says that "Revelation cannot be true if Natural Religion is false;"—which sentence is meant to be a continuation of the Argument of the preceding page, which is for Natural Theology,

and not for Natural Religion. But Bishop Butler is by no means the only Christian writer whom Lord Brougham would convict of inaccuracy. "Clarke, Bentley, and Derham" seem to be considered equally guilty. Bentley, indeed, does not escape merely with this censure, but is further rebuked, with some degree of feeling, for "his Sermon or rather *Vituperation* against Infidels," (see p. 202.) and Soame Jenyns' "injudicious defence of Christianity," is mentioned with ineffable contempt.

The underrating of Dr. Paley is ridiculously extreme, in a discourse professedly introductory to one of the works of that divine. His Lordship does not hesitate to denounce the Reverend Archdeacon, for positive "incapacity for metaphysical researches;" (see p. 80) and represents him as little better than an elegant copyist—who had but "little of scientific habits," and a "moderate power of generalizing!" Now, admitting the unjustifiable idolatry of Paley, which has been prevalent in this country, it must surely be owned that Lord Brougham might have expressed himself in terms rather more moderate than these. If he had been more cautious, his motive might have been less apparent for his extreme disparagement of an eloquent and successful Christian Author.

But turning for a moment from his Lordship's sneers at "even zealous" Christians (see p. 202), is it not singular to find that, while professedly *refuting* the unblushing Atheism of the Baron d'Holbach's *Système de la Nature*, he makes room for flattery of Infidel genius?

"It is impossible," says Lord Brougham, "to deny the merits of "the *Système de la Nature*." (See p. 233) And yet immediately afterwards he is obliged to confess that its chief merit consisted in its "extraordinary eloquence;" and that as a "piece of Reasoning it never rises above a set of plausible sophisms!" I conceive that Voltaire (of whose writings Lord Brougham appears to have made abundant use), was, at least, as good a judge of French composition as his Lordship; and it is somewhat singular that it is the "style and composition" of this book which Voltaire singles out for especial condemnation!

In the Review of some of Hume's opinions in note v. p. 248, the Deistical bias of his Lordship is even more apparent. The coolness

with which he comments on Hume's attacks on Revelation, presents a singular contrast to the seal with which he defends "Natural Religion." It must be noted, that when Lord Brougham speaks of "Religion," his observations apply to that Natural System which the Deists are so anxious to maintain; and yet I do not doubt that his Lordship's Defence of "Religion" in some passages of his Discourse, has passed for piety with many of his Readers.

It happened that that part of Lord Brougham's Discourse in which he betrays an awkward kind of admiration for Voltaire, came under my notice just as I had finished perusing the Atheistic ribaldry of that writer's tract, entitled "Songe de Platon." They who are acquainted with that impious production will sympathise with my feelings of disgust, on meeting with the anecdote which Lord Brougham records, of Voltaire's "excess of religious principle."

I have observed with pain that among all the Critics who have reviewed Lord Brougham's book, not one seems to have exposed that Deistical spirit which pervades it from first to last. Some have noticed his style—some his logic—some his philosophy—none his species of Religion. I am not aware, for instance, that so palpable a fact as the following has been yet noticed.—That he invariably speaks of "Christians" merely as *parties* in a Theological Argument; and never once associates himself with them, or their opinions—even by the general term "we." I repeat, I do not think it has *once* escaped him.

The words "Deist" and "Theist," are, strictly speaking, perhaps, synonymous; but yet it is generally to be observed that the former is used in a *bad*, and the latter in a good, sense. Custom has appropriated the term "Deist" to the enemies of all Revelations and of Christianity in particular. While the word Theist is considered applicable to all who believe in One God. Now Lord Brougham seems anxious to get rid of the obnoxious term Deist—that he may shelter his opinions in the generality of the most fashionable "Theist." Accordingly, when his Lordship had occasion to quote the preamble to the Boyle Lectures, he *professes* to give the exact words thus:—"The subject of the eight Sermons is to be *in the words of the will*." "The proof of the Christian Religion against notorious Infidels, Atheists, Theists, &c." (see p. 201.) Whoever will turn to the lectures will find that these are *not* the exact "words of the will."

The term there employed is "*Deists*." Is it very creditable to any writer to descend to this species of dishonesty? or is it difficult to perceive the reason of this great tenderness for Deism?

On the general arguments of the "*Discourse*," I cannot in this place enter. They must be admitted, however, to be infinitely superior to those of some of their pamphlet-critics; who do not seem to have always comprehended what they undertook to answer. The Examiners of his Lordship's *Metaphysics* are singularly unfortunate, as they have selected his very best and strongest points. It comes as little within my province to criticise the affected diction and pompous vocabulary of the *Discourse*. I own that I cannot see what is gained by the new and laborious exposition of terms—or the novel classification and arrangement of the Science with which his Lordship sets out. Simple-minded readers, perhaps, are apt to take all this for precision of language and accuracy of thought; and rest contented in the belief that there must be in reality some great discovery, and profound depth of thinking, where there are so many learned words—such a formidable apparatus of Greek derivatives—such manifold classifications—subdivisions—and analyses. I am obliged to confess my own inability to perceive what Lord Brougham has gained in point of accuracy, by this curious "*psychological*" display. I find nothing in "*the Discourse*" which might not be as clearly and fully expressed in the vulgar-tongue, as in his new "*deontological*" dialect. There is, perhaps, ground to suspect, that complaints of the obscurity of language and difficulty of expression not unfrequently arise from obscurity of thinking.

The French Revolution was preceded and accompanied by the writings of the Deistical philosophers, which undermined at once the Loyalty, the Faith, and the Morals of the Nation. Are we doomed in this, as in every thing else, to follow the fatal footsteps of France?

Note B. p. 62.

Lord Brougham (Disc. p. 248, &c.) has attempted to answer Mr. Hume's argument against Natural Theology ; but with what success the Reader must judge. It appears to me that while Mr. Hume confines himself to demonstrating the *insufficiency* of the proof of Natural Religion, he is unanswerable. (See note E.) And I leave it to any reader to decide, whether the utmost that Lord Brougham's *answer* amounts to is more than this—that Religion is not thereby *proved* to be impossible? I, for one, cannot see any more in it.

It has long seemed to me that considerable pains have been used, to represent Hume's opinions as a legitimate consequence of Berkeley's : whereas the philosophy of Berkeley furnishes us with the true key to the Discovery of Hume's error. Hume denied the existence of Efficient Causes. Berkeley founded his whole system on the belief of them. Berkeley insisted on the necessity of an Intelligent Efficient Cause for all the phenomena of nature. The opinions of that distinguished writer have been, however, almost systematically distorted.

In illustration of my meaning, I would select, for example, the references to Berkeley which are to be found in Dr. Gillies' Translation of Aristotle. Having quoted a passage from the Metaphysics, he pronounces it to have answered by anticipation the "errors of Hume, Hobbes, Berkeley, and others :—" The gross unfairness and ignorance of this style of criticism cannot easily be surpassed. Especially as the very passage quoted may be interpreted in perfect accordance with Berkeley's sentiments ; and is generally expressed even in words which Berkeley himself might have written : " το μὲν ἔν μὴ το
" τα αἰσθητά εἶναι, μὴτε τα αἰσθητά, ἴσως ἀληθὲς· τε γὰρ αἰσθανόμεθα
" παθος τούτο ἴστί· το δὲ τα ὑποκείμενα μὴ εἶναι ἃ ποιοῖ τὴν αἰσθ· τὴν,
ἀδύνατον." The reason which Aristotle gives for the Existence of something "beyond sense," " ἵτιον τι παρὰ τὴν αἰσθησιν," is exactly what Berkeley alleged for an Intelligent Cause of all things, " το
" γὰρ κινεῖν τε κινούμενους πρότερον ἴστί." If this were the only passage in which Dr. Gillies had betrayed both a want of fairness towards those with whom he differs, and a want of knowledge on the sub-

jects which he professes to handle, I should not have selected it thus.

The opponents of Berkeley seem generally to have learned their "objections" from one another; as few of them betray many signs of having read a single Treatise of that profound thinker. It has long appeared to me, that the whole of the philosophical controversy, in which Berkeley occupies so distinguished a position, may be brought to this issue—Is that which we have called our "Fundamental Axiom"—true or false? viz., that "Whatever begins to be must have a CAUSE?—And that, not an occult—blindly-working Cause, (which is a contradiction), but an INTELLIGENCE? Berkeley maintained the truth of this axiom; and upon this his whole system may be established. (See on this subject p. 73, &c., of this Dissertation; and some remarks in Professor Whewell's *Bridgewater Treatise*, p. 365.

Dr. Reid was considered, at one time, by a certain class of philosophers, as the confuter and demolisher of Berkeley's doctrine. But Dr. Brown has severely confuted this pretended confutation. Not that Dr. Brown agrees with Berkeley!—By no means! He has a "Confutation," of his own making, perfectly ready, when he has rejected Reid's. Therefore, leaving Reid in the hands of his able opponent, we will see at what point Dr. Brown fancied that he discovered a flaw in Berkeley's argument.

"Sic parvis componere magna" necesse est!

And I think the reader will be of opinion that *as yet* Berkeley has not been answered.

I must give Dr. Brown the credit of boldly announcing the unpopular truth that the imagined distinction between the primary and secondary qualities of matter is a groundless distinction. He seems, indeed, to think it absurd. "As if," he exclaims, "any qualities of matter could become known to the mind, but as they are capable of affecting the Mind with certain feelings, and as relative therefore to the feelings which they excite;"—"but," he elsewhere remarks, with a cool and amusing air of superiority, "the pious demonstration of Berkeley is obviated at once by affirming that ideas are only the mind affected in a certain manner!"—[27th Lecture.] How is this? I ask. I do not myself see the cogency of the inference; for Berkeley himself lays down exactly what Brown here affirms, as a

confutation of him! But Berkeley *further* insisted, that when the mind was "affected in a certain manner," (though he expressed himself in rather better language than this) there *must* be some CAUSE which so affects it, and Dr. Brown does not disprove this. He *mistakes* Berkeley's opinion *in toto* by supposing that according to him, "ideas had a distinct existence apart from the mind"—which very hypothesis it was the labour of Berkeley's life to confute!

Note C. p. 104.

It is observable, that most of the disputes concerning Moral Science regard the Origin rather than the Nature of Morality. On which subject there are some interesting remarks in Dr. Chalmers's Bridgewater Treatise, in the chapter on Miscellaneous Adaptations.

But I am inclined to believe that there is not so great a difference, as is commonly imagined, even among the theories of the Origin of our moral ideas.

All men seem to agree that Morality has reference to some LAW—which Law seems to be generally regarded as a stable, and not an ever-varying thing. Thus, the Aristotelian would denominate this Law; the General Intention or Law of NATURE. The Christian (meaning the same thing) would prefer to speak of it as the Law of GOD; or his Will. And since every law tending to promote the good of a community is in harmony with the Intention of Nature, every legislator might consider his own particular laws (being adapted to the benefit of the state) to be binding on every man in the state; so that even the conventional morality of a state has reference to Law; which law will eventually be altered, if it oppose the moral convictions of mankind.

The superiority of Christianity is manifested in the *method* which it adopts to obtain conformity to this universally admitted LAW in Nature. Every particular philosopher would furnish such means as were agreeable to his Moral Theory. The Aristotelian, for instance, would rely on the disposition of a well-informed and virtuous man. But not one-thousandth part of the human race could ever become Moral by philosophic principles and means. Therefore Legislators, instead of trusting to these, enforce obedience to their Laws more effectually by means of the FEAR of Punishment. It must, however, be owned that in all means of this nature there is something of an ignoble and inferior kind; which seems to interfere with that chief excellence of obedience—pure voluntariness. Now,

the means which Christianity furnishes, appear equally noble with the Philosopher's, equally extensive in influence with the Legislator's. The LOVE of God's LAW implanted in the heart of man is the Christian means of Moral Obedience—noble enough for the sage—and which may be universal enough for the world.

Note D.

It has been shown very fully by Eusebius, (Prep. Evan. l. 10.) by Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and other early Christian writers, that, in the words of Dr. Cave, "whatever useful and excellent notions the great masters of Religion amongst the Heathen had amongst them, 'tis plain they borrowed, or more truly stole them from the writings of the ancient Jews." Moses, indeed, not only wrote many ages before their oldest Authors, Orpheus, Homer, or Hesiod—but seems to be able to boast a higher antiquity than even the Gods of the Classical Mythology. The English reader may gather much on this subject from Dr. Cudworth,—See also Dr. Hales' Analysis of Chronology.—vol. 4, p. 459, &c.

Note E.

I quote the following from Coleridge to illustrate this point:—

“ My sight and touch convey to me a certain impression, to which my Understanding applies its preconceptions (*conceptus, antecedentes et generalissimi*) of Quantity and Relation, and thus refers it to the class and name of three-cornered bodies. We will suppose it the iron of a turf-spade. It compares the sides, and finds that any two measured as one are greater than the third; and according to a law of the imagination, there arises a presumption that in all other bodies of the same figure (i. e. three-cornered and equilateral) the same proportion exists. After this, the senses have been directed successively to a number of three-cornered bodies of *unequal* sides—and in these too the same proportion has been found without exception, till at length it becomes a fact of *experience*, that in *all* triangles hitherto seen the two sides together are greater than the third: and there will exist no ground or analogy for anticipating an exception to a rule generalized from so vast a number of particular instances. So far and no farther could the Understanding carry us: and as far as this ‘the faculty, judging according to sense,’ conducts many of the *inferior* animals, if not in the same, yet in instances analogous and fully equivalent.

“ The Reason supersedes the whole process, and on the first conception presented by the Understanding in consequence of the first sight of a triangular figure of whatever sort it might chance to be, it affirms with an assurance incapable of future increase, with a perfect *certainty*, that in all possible triangles any two of the inclosing lines *will* and *must* be greater than the third. In short, Understanding in its highest form of experience, remains commensurate with the experimental notices of the senses, from which it is generalized. Reason, on the other hand, either predetermines experience, or avails itself of a past experience to supersede its necessity in all future time; and affirms truths which no sense could perceive, nor experiment verify, nor experience confirm.”—*Aids to Reflection*, p. 223.

This distinction between Truths of Reason and Truths of Understanding will furnish the only conclusive answer to Mr. Hume’s argument referred to in note B.

Mr. Hume had denied that Man could obtain any knowledge of the Moral Governor of the Universe from the works of Nature—even if the theory of Causation were admitted ; *because* we have no right to *argue* that any Cause is *more* than the alleged Effect shows him to be. Therefore, if it could be proved that this Creation was the work of some Mighty Superior Being, it would not from thence follow that he was the Omnipotent Moral Governor of the Universe. We cannot fairly argue that his power extends one hair's breadth beyond that which we see that it has wrought.—Now this Argument cannot be answered by those who derive all our knowledge from Sense. Therefore, if there be no Truths except empirical Truths, if there be no truths except “ Truths of Understanding ”—there can be no Religion ; for “ Understanding in its highest form of experience, remains commensurate with the experimental notices of the senses from which it is generalized.” “ The things that are seen are temporal—the things that are not seen are Eternal.”—See also p. 195 of this volume.

Note F.—*Miscellaneous.*

Page 1.—I would not by my opening observation be thought to imply any belief in the modern theories of human perfectibility. In speaking of the “progress of human society,” I allude only to that amount of civilized advancement which may be proved by the facts of history; and I conceive that I might on other occasions with equal propriety speak of the “retrograde of the human species,” at different times, and under various circumstances. The theory that civilization has arisen out of primeval barbarism is contradicted by the facts of antiquity. Our present position does not, as I conceive, furnish any analogical argument for the notion of the perfectibility of man. I am not, indeed, distrustful of a glorious final destiny in reserve for us—but I do not anticipate that it will be accomplished by philosophising theorists, or idolators of education. To all such I would apply the words of the Poet, “You talk Utopia!”

It is observable that almost every monarchy, before that of the Roman Empire appears to have degraded the human race. The spread of Christianity may partly account for the difference.

Page 24.—I cannot but take this opportunity of stating my conviction that the restoration of the Chorepiscopi of the Ancient Church, on some such plan as that alluded to by Mr. Newman of Oriel in his pamphlet on the subject, would be attended with the most salutary effects. I subjoin some remarks which I made some time since through the medium of the periodical press.

“Our position as a church is materially affected by the late alterations in the frame-work of the Constitution. A state of things which under the old system might not have wrought serious practical mischief, under the present system may bring total ruin on the establishment. *Our legislators and highest patrons may be our worst foes!* If our present condition is to be improved, it must not be by a patchwork reform, to answer the exigencies of the present moment—it must be by a vigorous and prospective policy immediately commenced. The evil does not admit of delay

Already almost we are fulfilling the description of the historian—*Nec vitia nostra, nec remedia pati possumus.*

“ A pamphlet has recently been put forth by Mr. Newman, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, recommending the restoration of Suffragan Bishops; in which he has given a brief statement of the nature and history of their office. We are disposed to believe that no single measure which could be proposed would be productive of such extensive advantage to the Church as that which Mr. Newman here advocates.

“ In the ancient church the bishoprics were not even comparatively so large and populous as now; and in proportion as a diocese became populous, the metropolitan ordained *chorepiscopi*, or country bishops; subsequently called ‘suffragans’ (probably from their having a vote in councils with their metropolitans). For the establishment of suffragan bishops, the sanction of antiquity may be adduced, from the churches of Europe, Asia, and Africa, in their earliest times, and the urgent necessity for them in the present day, among us, surely will not need demonstration. ‘The burden of this people,’ a population of 20,000,000, is too great for our bishops to bear alone. A diocese of 1,883,958, such as that of Chester, or of 1,722,685, like that of London, is sufficient to overwhelm any one man, even with its temporal business, to say nothing of that which is the highest and most serious consideration—the immense spiritual responsibility.

“ There is one feature about Mr. Newman’s pamphlet which we feel bound, in times such as these, to single out for commendation. There is throughout a tone of religious and loyal submission and deference to the authority of the bishops of our apostolic church, which forms a singular contrast to the prevalent language of the day, even among the clergy. We hear too much of the ‘readiness of the clergy to co-operate with the bishops,’ and too little of their readiness to obey them as the delegates of Christ, who have received their high authority from him to rule his church, and who are responsible to him alone. That it is the duty of the clergy to co-operate with the bishops is undeniable; but it is a strange sign of the times that the clergy think it necessary in their addresses to their spiritual rulers to *inform* them of this! Far different, however, is the tone of Mr. Newman, (though he has once accidentally made use of the words which we have objected to;)

there is a reverence for the bishop's high office and authority pervading his pages, which we earnestly hope will prove contagious among his brethren. We cannot forbear quoting the following contrast from page 14, as illustrative of this point. Our readers will see that the 'co-operation' of the clergy is not mentioned with that *patronizing* air which we have just complained of. After alluding to the 'over-populousness' of the dioceses, he continues :—

“ Such vast charges must be distressing even to the most vigorous minds ; oppressing them with a sense of responsibility, if not, rather, engrossing, dissipating, and exhausting their minds with the mere formal routine of business. If they are able to sustain such duties, they are greater than the inspired lawgiver of Israel, who said, ‘ I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.’ Nothing is more necessary to the Rulers of the Church, than that they should have seasons of leisure. A whirl of business is always unfavourable to depth and accuracy of religious views. It is one chief end of the institution of the ministerial order itself, that there should be men in the world who have time to think apart from it, and live above it, in order to influence those whose duties call them more directly into the bustle of it. So much was this felt in early times, that places of retreat were sometimes assigned to the Bishops at a distance from their city, whither they were expected to betake themselves, during certain seasons of the year, for the purpose of collecting their minds. Doubtless such leisure may be abused, as every thing else ; but so far is clear, that while leisure *may* become an evil, an incessant hurry of successive engagements *must* be an evil, a serious evil, to the whole Church, hurtful to any one, and more than personally hurtful, dangerous to the common cause, in the case of those who are by office guides of conduct, arbiters in moral questions, patterns of holiness and wisdom, and not the mere executive of a system which is ordered by prescribed rules, and can go on without them. And when it is recollected that, in addition to their ecclesiastical duties, our Prelates have their place in the councils of the realm, most eneficially to the nation (which, indeed, as a Christian people, is bound to uphold them there,) not to mention the necessity of their meeting together

annually, for various ecclesiastical purposes, it must be evident to every one that they, more than any other order in the Church, require assistance in their Dioceses, during at least a part of the year; and that to them especially applies an appellation, in its right and honourable sense, which is given by our adversaries with a mixture of pity and disrespect to others. The Bishops are the true "working Clergy;" and most undoubtedly, the moment they give us a hint of their wishes (which they recently have done in the Royal Commission,) we are absolutely bound, we cannot without undutifulness omit, to evidence our interest, and promise our co-operation, in whatever they shall determine for the better administration of their Dioceses, and meanwhile to assist them by such suggestions as we have reason to hope may not be unpleasing to them.'

"Mr. Newman then proceeds to notice some of the great benefits resulting from a 'resident episcopacy' as well as a resident clergy.

"The ordinary Church Histories (proverbially defective) furnish but little information relative to the ancient office of the Suffragan.

"Since the time of the Reformation no small pains have been taken by some Romanists, to show that the suffragan bishops were not *really*, but only *nominally* bishops, and that their ordination was not therefore valid; and when we remember the part which Hodgkins, Suffragan Bishop of Bedford, took in the consecration of Archbishop Parker, it becomes a subject of no small interest to the members of the reformed Catholic Church. If, as we earnestly hope, these *chorepiscopoi*, be now revived among us, we do as earnestly hope that this subject will be seriously considered, in order that no question may rise concerning it in future times. It was surely an error of the most mischievous kind to introduce into the statute of Henry VIII. the passage which enacted that the 'authority of the suffragan ceased with the commission of the bishop' who might have appointed him. (26, Hen. VIII, c. 14.) This can only tend to lower and degrade the episcopal character. Undoubtedly, the consecrated bishop, (however small his jurisdiction, whatever his earthly dignity may be, whether he be peer of parliament, or not) derives his authority from the Great Head and Founder of the Church, and it savours of Romanism to teach

that another bishop can deprive him of an authority so received. In restoring these bishops, let the model of antiquity be imitated. In temporal matters, let them, indeed, be subject to their metropolitans, but in spiritual matters let them be, as far as possible, independent.

“While we thus refer to antiquity, we are aware that a question has been raised—whether there were not two kinds of *chorepiscopi* in the ancient church? And it has been argued from the tenth canon of the Council of Antioch, that the office itself was not episcopal though a bishop might hold and exercise it. Those who would wish to see all that can be urged in defence of this untenable hypothesis, we refer to the 44th Dissertation of Natal. Alexander, on the History of the Fourth Century, in the 4th Volume of his Ecclesiastical History. We will simply state that the whole of this Jesuit’s pretended demonstration, is founded on his own *strained* inference from the word *etiamsi*, which occurs in the canon alluded to.

“In the note to page 41, Mr. Newman has suggested a subject of inquiry, which we should like to see investigated—viz. How the suffragans became suppressed in this country? It is sufficiently evident in history that the Metropolitans from the sixth century at least, had been jealous of their influence, (and in the ninth they were suppressed, by edict, in the Gallican church,) but this is hardly sufficient to account for their total extinction in this country.”

Page 80—I would here refer to Soame Jenyns’ Enquiry—Bayle’s Enquiry—and Abp. King’s Origin of Evil. The chief defenders of the hypothesis referred to in the Text are now to be found among the Calvinists; most of whose arguments may be met with in St. Augustin, Aquinus, and Jansenius.

Page 103. The fundamental principles of Aristotle’s inductive method are; That Nature does nothing in vain. And, That the real experience of Men, their arts, systems, (Eth. B. 1. c. 1.) language, (c. 4.) actions and choices, are good and sufficient data for a practical Treatise on human morals.

Page 120. “Compare, I beseech you, the consequences on both sides.

The world (say I,) resembles an animal.

Therefore, it is an animal.

Therefore, it arose from generation.

The steps, I confess, are wide; yet there is some small appearance of analogy in each step.

The world (say others) resembles a machine.

Therefore, it is a machine.

Therefore, it arose from design.

The steps are here equally wide; and the analogy less striking."

Hume's Dialogues. Nat. Rel. pp. 79, 184.

Page 148. I cannot forbear, in this place, from alluding to the often-quoted disregard of Lord Bacon for the whole inquiry into Final Causes; which he half contemptuously declared to be "dedicated to God, and barren like a vestal." Professor Whewell, in his *Bridgewater Treatise*, has thus beautifully followed out the doubtful metaphor of Bacon:—

"If he had had occasion to develope his simile, (full of eloquent meaning as his similes often are) he would probably have said—That to these Final Causes barrenness was no reproach; seeing that they ought to be not the mothers, but the daughters of our Natural Sciences; and that they were barren, not by the imperfection of their nature, but in order that they might be kept pure and undefiled; and as fit ministers in the temple of God."

Page 133, *middle*.—I am very far from acquiescing in this opinion, and only mention it to show that there could be no very clear knowledge on the subject, if such an opinion could be for a moment entertained, as it has been by men of some ingenuity. When in the *Parmenides*, *το εἶ* is said to be prior to *ὡς*. I understand it to mean priority "in modo concipiendi," and not in the manner of existence. Just as Dr. Clarke in his "Demonstration" conceives of the "necessary existence" of the Deity as prior to his "self-existence"—though both are affirmed to be eternal. As, also, the Church maintains the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, the Second Hypostasis of the Trinity, though a kind of priority "in modo concipiendi," be attributable to the FATHER.

Page 138.—Dr. Johnson in his Review of Soame Jenyns, does not scruple to admit the predominance of Evil over Good in the world.—On the whole subject of the dilemma of Epicurus concerning the Goodness and Power of God—see *Tucker's Light of Nature*.

Page 159.—"Although the Moderns teach that space is real

“ and infinitely extended, yet if we consider that it is no intellectual notion, nor yet perceived by any of our senses, we shall, perhaps be inclined to think with Plato in his *Timæus*, that this also is the result of a λογισμος νοδος, or spurious reasoning, and a kind of waking dream.”—*Berkeley's Siris*.



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